



Beatrice Anderson

Elnor Anderson

John Anderson

Daisy Bly

Doris Bly

James Bly

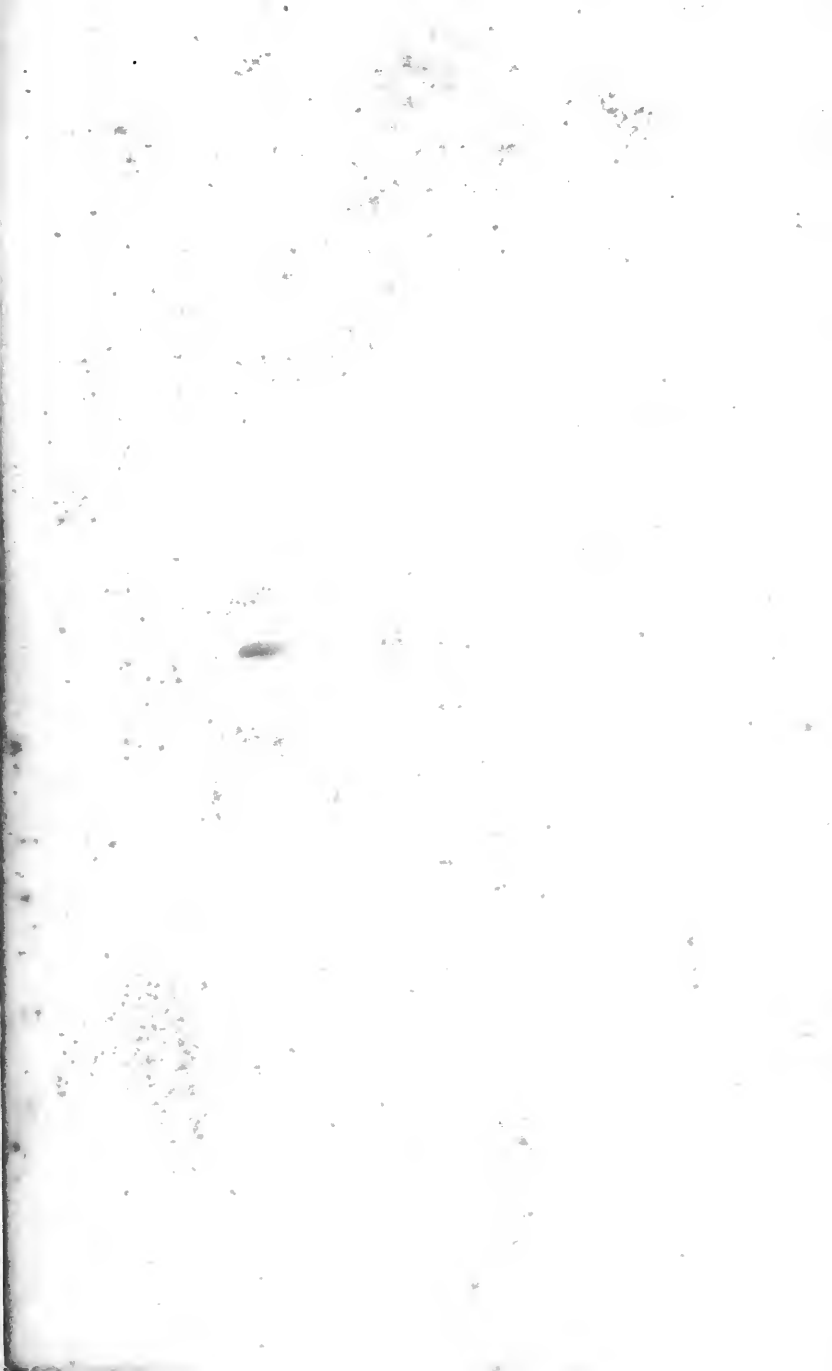
Edwara Bly

Evelyn Miles

Genevieve Logan

Edora Thomas

Helen Price



LETTERS

AND

MISCELLANIES

IN

PROSE, RHYME, AND BLANK-VERSE.

*Miss C. Anderson*  
BY

LOUISE ELEMJAY,  
A LADY OF THE SOUTH.

*see P. 13*  
*see P. 6*

A sigh, a smile, and folly's tinkling chime,  
These are our footprints on the sands of time.

CINCINNATI:  
MOORE, ANDERSON, WILSTACH & KEYS,  
28 WEST FOURTH STREET.  
1852.

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA  
AT LOS ANGELES



## MONOLOGUE WITH THE PURCHASER.

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JUST please to lay down this book, Mr. Borrower, we don't commit black and white for you to read, and shouldn't be propitiated if you were to sit up the whole blessed night to sponge a perusal; so you see, friend Purchaser, that if we are "tedious as a king," we intend you to have the entire benefit of that uncommon idiosyncrasy.

"And you know it used to be the fashion for the poor, craven, fawning, toady of an author, to deprecate the wrath of the critics in a good set speech, anticipating and admitting their righteous verdict of denunciation, and then to smooth down the ruffled plumage of the minor literati, or reading public, with a plentiful libation of stale, fulsome commonplace, invariably winding up with a pathetic appeal for toleration, patronage, and sympathy. *Mi-rab-i-le!* Wouldn't we like to catch ourselves at anything of the kind in "*this* ENLIGHTENED AGE?" You have doubtless good sound sense and literary taste, or you wouldn't have bought our book; but as to the general enlightenment, we can't speak positively, till we see what reception it gives to these LETTERS and MISCELLANIES.

As for the critics, they may find it amusing to throw dust into other people's eyes, but we don't—gold dust more particularly; and as for making "the fine eyes" to sweeten their cream-o'-tartar visages, that's out of the question; cause why, it's much easier for some folks to make ugly faces "now-a-days," than pretty ones. And then, the supposition of their ever looking much beyond the title-page of one-half the books they undertake to praise or berate so unmercifully, is so refreshingly verdant, that it would be cruel to tantalize the locusts and caterpillars by any such pretension! So, you see, there is no help for it—they will e'en have to abuse us to their heart's content; though our own private opinion (publicly expressed) is, that they will feel far more fatigued than satisfied, when they have done; for we intend to go right off to an insurance office, and then if we are "killed with a criticism," it will be a matter for the stockholders to look into.

But, only think now, of saying GENTLE READER, to some snarling, vinegar-faced cynic—telling him your book is infinitely beneath the notice of his high mightiness—yet begging and beseeching that he will graciously please to read and condescend to praise it, nevertheless. "Angels and ministers of grace defend us!" Does the Public ever expect us to "sin our poor miserable soul" after that fashion? If it does, it needn't! And you wouldn't have us to *fib* so upon any account, would you? for, certes, you must know, we do think the book very

well worth your time and money too—otherwise we should feel very much like having swindled you out of that dollar, and that would be an uncomfortable sensation. Not but that you may be used to such operations, and also that there may be some better poetry, and even prose, extant; though ours is very good—the poetry we mean—to fill up the pages and diversify their appearance; so, on the whole, it is pretty confidently expected that you will find yourself exceedingly well entertained, for the time being, by these random gleanings from the past: Always *provided* you don't dash them down in a fury, the first time a wipe of the pen happens to come across any of your sectional, sectarian, or political prepossessions.

Don't do it, friend; in the first place, it's undignified, very, unless you happen to be a philosopher, in which case you can say, "*It's enough to provoke a saint,*" and then rave as much as you like; in the second, it won't alter the type, or the facts, or the author's opinion in the least; and then again, a woman being never very celebrated for knowing her own mind long at a time, it's just possible you may find *a recantation*, if you only keep on. That depends, though, on whether the subject comes up again of its own accord, for our readers being sensible, can not of course expect us to go out of the way merely to say, *We are a vast deal wiser now than we were twenty years ago*; for where is the use of being tossed up and down the world like Sancho Panza in his blanket, if there is nothing to be learned in the process?

But, whatever you do, don't worry yourself about identity or venue, for if ever you come to the conclusion that both are transparent as gossamer, the chances are, just then, very much in favor of your having mystified yourself most beautifully. Not that there's anything special to conceal, or that we haven't a perfect right to put ourselves in a pillory, unmasked, for your edification; but then we don't choose all our acquaintance to feel that their daguerreotypes have been stolen and hawked up and down the country; so, if you chance to belong to "that useful and ingenious class of citizens who prefer minding everybody's business beside their own," just thank your kind, and our "contrary-minded" stars, for having given you a peep into somebody's private correspondence, and some little insight into matters and things which don't concern you in the least.

"But, oh! my heart is sad, and my lips are mute,  
As I yield up to *censure* the dreams of my youth,  
Whose warblings brought  
Shadows of beauty to whisper with me,  
Love, hope, feeling, and fantasy,  
From the realms of thought!"

However, one's courage may be "screwed up to the sticking point," and you are just as welcome as your neighbor, so "take the goods the gods have provided, and be thankful!"

Yours, as you demean yourself,

THE AUTHOR, or, if you *insist*, THE WRITERESS.

*Sharon, Mississippi, 1852.*



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# LETTERS AND MISCELLANIES.

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## LETTER I.

### FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF VIRGINIA.

TO J. S. AND NIECE.

*Eagle Eyrie, Va., Aug. 19, 1828 or 9.\**

MY DEAR UNCLE AND SISTER,

You will no doubt be surprised at my date, but it is even so—here I am on the banks of old Powhatan, though, with my eyes closed, I can scarce realize that I am not still standing on the soil of my native state.

As no satisfactory explanation of this singular departure from the original, or rather ostensible plan of travel can be given, suffice it to say that such was Mr. B——'s pleasure; and further that the *contre-temps* of the first twenty-four hours, were a most appropriate prelude to the whole performance. It was not indeed productive of any incident peculiarly disastrous; but abounded in petty annoyances sufficient to rouse apathy itself into rage; being, as they generally were, the result of B——'s excellent contrivance, and his laudable effort, to see *how* disgusting a "would be wit, and can't be gentleman," could render himself, by enacting at sixty the beau of nineteen.

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\* Dates omitted in first copy, are now doubtful.

We left Geneva at the time appointed, spent two days in Utica, as many more inspecting the notabilities of Albany and its vicinity, visited Troy, Lansingburgh, the Falls of the Cohoes; and last, not least, attended service in a neat country church, imbosomed in one of the loveliest groves man ever consecrated to his Maker. It was a perfect gem of beauty; but that is nothing to B——'s encomium—namely, that the officiating clergyman "*never varied but once (and that was probably a lapsus linguæ) from his standard of pronunciation.*" If that isn't honor enough, his reverence must have a very inordinate share of vanity; so I suppress all names for fear of endangering his humility. It will never do, though, to omit, among other unimportant items, a flying call on the father, brother, and cousins of the learned critic. We dined with one of the latter, and despite my predetermination to dislike the whole kith and kin, found some of them extremely polite and intelligent; *all* wealthy, respectable, and much, very much more agreeable than could have been expected, judging from the specimen previously exhibited of the family.

August 1st, we left for New York; but taking Hudson *en route*, did not arrive until the evening of the 2d. On the following morning, I had the pleasure of hearing the old man (I can't find it in my heart to call him gentleman) announce his intention of proceeding to Virginia in the first packet that sailed for Norfolk. Remonstrance was useless, so I at length signified *my* intention to remain as long as I saw good—that is, until I had seen all the lions—unless he condescended to assign a reason, for this unexpected procedure. He had only a pretext, submission had to follow of course,

so finding my power absolute, and knowing that it must inevitably be short; I resolved (as any good lover of authority would) to make the most of it while it lasted. And verily the way in which I proclaimed and executed my own good will and pleasure for three consecutive days, would have done honor to the Grand Seignior, or the Autocrat of all the Russias. Never was city more thoroughly reconnoitered in the same length of time by a single individual. Paul Pry himself could not have exceeded me in ferreting out things worthy to be looked at; and I believe the sexagenarian's brain fairly reeled with the rapidity of my evolutions; for if he didn't find the full-significance of *imperium ad imperio*, illustrated—much to the benefit of future scholastics no doubt—in a way he never imagined before, I am much mistaken. “*Transit gloria*” must have consoled him though, for even the Czar has only a quarter of a century, and I had considerably less; so my last act of absolutism (“oh lame and impotent conclusion”) was, declining to take passage in the dirty old vessel which the dirt-loving old Dutchman had selected—for the sake of *cheapness* I presume—and pronounced “*nice* and elegant.” Fortunately my own choice fell on a packet, whose owner was going out to see how she made her first trip; and he, being an acquaintance of one of “mine hostess’” boarders, was brought round to Courtlandt street and introduced. This all sounds very puerile and commonplace; yet but for this apparently trivial incident, I should have been left entirely without protection.

There had been fires in the city for two nights previous; the first, which destroyed a new and very valuable block of buildings on Laurens street, did not disturb the Benedict's equanimity in the least: but the

seconded which consumed a book and stationery store containing some of his invaluable works on Elementary Education—"for the use of schools in the United States and Great Britain"—so "deranged his plans" (for plans read *feelings*), that he resolved to abandon me to the care of strangers. It was only at the very last minute though, that this caricature of a man came into the cabin, exhausted his breath and his rhetoric, in the delivery of as many "*nice*," plausible little "fibs" as he could conveniently invent, and then took his leave.

Grief for his absence did not, however, prevent my watching the green islands and shores that rose and expanded to view, bright, beautiful as youth's earliest dream of happiness, with an intensity of feeling I can neither recall nor describe. Unfortunately, the mood was an evanescent one, so I fell to calculating how long I should be willing to be lashed to a mast and wet to the skin for the sake of seeing old Nep. in a magnificent fury. Don't scold me, I was tolerably reasonable after all; but the sparkling waves that threw their light spray gracefully over the bow of the boat, intimated pretty clearly that his godship had no idea of putting himself in a passion for any such insignificant mortal as myself, so I went below, to administer, if necessary, to the comfort of another lady passenger, who was by this time quite sick—with the further intention of preparing my eyes for a moonlight survey of the waters, by closing them against an hour or two's sunshine—but on entering the cabin, found, to my surprise, that instead of rendering, I had to receive assistance, and soon perceived the rolling of the vessel to be as complete a cure for excited imagination, as I had imagined the latter for seasickness. Happily, my initiation was both short and

slight—I left the deck about eleven o'clock one morning, and returned a little earlier on the next. Mr. A. the proprietor, constructed me a sort of arbor, out of coats, cloaks, and umbrellas, and spared no pains to make my passage agreeable as possible. Indeed, I soon found that I had fallen into excellent hands when abandoned to his care. His quiet, unobtrusive, and gentlemanly manner, contrasted admirably with the never-ceasing officiousness of his predecessor. His kindness in having me set ashore, (on the evening of the 12th,) half a mile *below* the “Landing,” spared me a circuitous and fatiguing walk to Maj. C.’s residence—when you recollect the value of a fresh breeze after a calm, you will appreciate this courtesy all the better—a few moments then brought us to his door; I was introduced, and Mr. A. soon after bade me farewell. He was the last link in the chain of my New York acquaintance, and his departure made me feel at once *alone* in a land of strangers.

Nothing, however, was wanting on the part of “the Major,” as Mr. C. is commonly styled, to dissipate this unpleasant feeling; and the ladies of his family, four in number, evinced so much kindness of feeling, and hospitality of intention, that I soon ceased to remark what struck me, at first, as the somewhat singular manner in which it was developed. One of these “nine hundred and ninety-ninth cousins,” a coarse, good-natured, and rather good-looking *passee*, with more diameter of ancle than an orthodox belle should have, is the individual alluded to by B., as the “elegant and accomplished lady” of his ex-excellency—at least I *infer* that she is, as he has no wife, and she is *Madam*, the mistress. The children are all from home at present, nor are they expected to return for several months. I am not sorry

to have some leisure for reflection, before entering on an untried experiment; but fear that so much time unemployed, will cause me to regret more and more having missed the pleasure of visiting Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, according to my original expectation.

Rather than waste it in useless repining, I will employ a small portion in transporting your minds to my present abode. Gladly would I do it with the same grace that Mr. A. transferred me to the fatherly care of its proprietor; but this you will not expect. The exterior of the domicile is rather more than respectable, though merely *wooden*, the interior exceeds it, perhaps, in the estimation of eyes accustomed to its style; but to me, *the naked floors*, waxed and polished until one is thrown into a nervous fever, by constant apprehension of a fall and conscious inability to rise, present as cheerless, comfortless, desolate a prospect, as one would wish to contemplate in his most misanthropic hours. The walls appear to have been painted and witewashed in days of yore, and doubtless, "once were clean and may be so again," though this is rather problematical. The furniture is scarce and plain, and seems to have escaped the fortunes of war during the ravages of Cornwallis, to the end it might become a resting-place for musquitoes; of which Virginia is the paradise.

Now, *there* is another sentence would throw Blair into spasmodics; but never mind, I think I am beyond his jurisdiction now, and shall tack appendages to sentences just whenever I please.

The garden is indeed a southern one, in the profusion and variety of its shrubs and flowers; their absence might cause a sigh of regret, their presence, in their present location, creates a pang of dissatisfaction. The



eminence, too, on which the mansion stands, might command an extensive view of the noble river that washes its base, did not *unsightly* trees intercept the prospect, and impede the descent. Nature has done everything for the place, art nothing! It wants only the reforming hand of taste, and Eagle Eyrie might become a scene of surpassing loveliness. But the river—the fairy river—man did not make, he has not marred it! It has not, indeed, (not at this point at least,) the bold banks and magnificent scenery of the Hudson; which, with some of the loveliest creations that ever bore the impress of divinity, suspend the very existence of the beholder in motionless rapture over its romantic charm; but beauty, beauty is written on the lightest curl of every wave that reflects back to the sunbeam all the colors of the rainbow; yes, “beauty that one must feel and see, to know how beautiful this world can be.”

Unfortunately, there seems to be less moral than physical loveliness, extant in this immediate vicinity. My acquaintance is very limited to be sure; but that circumstance alone does not account for the fact, that thus far I have met with little more mental cultivation than the first colonists did. It appears to me that among the ladies, at least, such a thing as a literary taste is a perfect nonentity. It would seem that here, the simple birthright of freedom entitles the possessor, unless very poor, to consider himself the peer of the proudest in the land; and when conjoined with wealth, supersedes the necessity of any other qualification for such companionship: but you may tell my good old friend, Mrs. H., to dismiss all uneasiness on my account, predicated on suspicion that Virginia is an “Infidel State.” Nowhere is the *name* of religion more honored; and if she does

occasionally see "letters from pious females" and "tract distributors," purporting to come from this State, which speak of "taking up the cross," "being steadfast under persecution," and "following one's Master through evil as well as good report," she may rest assured *that* phraseology (if, indeed, the whole be not a "*pious* fraud,") only proves the writer to have imbibed a sectarian cant of expression. The profession of religion is not a cross but "a crown;" the name is popular whether the thing signified is common or not. I suppose it must be though, as the Baptists and Methodists include, I am told, nearly all the respectable population of this and the adjoining counties, in their respective denominations. I was rather in hopes to have made acquaintance with the "old Church of England;" but as near as I can learn, it seems to have gone pretty much out of fashion in the Old Dominion.

I have attended public service only once since my arrival; but will endeavor to give you some idea of the performance. To begin at the beginning, the appearance of Maj. C.'s equipage created quite a sensation you must know; *clergyman*, gentleman, negro, and clown, all seeming so eager to render every needful assistance, that I began to fear we should have to remain in *statu quo* for the rest of the day. I was mistaken, however, we were at length handed out of the carriage, and into the house. This, I suspect, must have been built in reference to a certain text in Exodus, which refers to the erection of an altar, and prohibits the use of tools in its construction. It is simply a rough, covered frame, one story and a half high, with a small window in the rear of the desk; but no other convenience (except the doors,) for the admission of air and light, when the solid, heavy blinds

are closed down. The seats are not "fixtures," but they are in admirable keeping with the residue of the establishment. No sooner had the congregation become stationary than an old gentleman volunteered to edify them by the exercise of his vocal powers, and commenced singing "Sweet is the work, my God, my King," carefully inserting a double rest between every note of the tune, and syllable of the line. When *he* had disposed of two stanzas in this way, and was about to make a desperate attack upon a third, and *I* had come to the commendable resolution of abstracting my attention from his psalmody, and bestowing it on the manners and persons of those around me, the Major entered, and with a voice, as your friend W. G. would say, "rich, deep, and melodious as the harps of Heaven," succeeded so far in neutralizing the leader's performance, that I forgot to return the compliment of the "assembled worshippers," who, I since learn, manifested a most laudable intention of familiarizing their optics with every line in the combination of my features, and every thread in the texture of my dress. Singing over, the "preacher," a cousin-german of Sir John Falstaff, judging from appearances, commenced a discourse, to which "give every devil his due," would have been a most appropriate prefix; and proceeded with a nasal twang which would have stamped him orthodox in the days of the Protectorate. But alas for exacting poor human nature, too many of his auditors—insiders as well as outsiders—instead of thriving demurely on the spiritual food dispensed, commenced satiating their corporeal appetites with all the fruit and tobacco within their reach. And even good old exemplars—like the very pattern-hearer, who was "*mighty fond of preaching, and didn't care*

*much what it was so it was only preaching*—getting perhaps a little jealous of monopoly, contrived by sundry unctious sighs, groans, and “*Amens*” to come in for their full share of attention, and circumvent all wicked wights who might feel an ungodly curiosity to know what the speaker really was saying; till I, for one, was quite as much delighted by the close of his remarks as you can possibly be by that of my comments. That was rather ungrateful though, for he certainly did originate one comparison entirely new to me—perhaps it may be so to you, so I repeat it for the benefit of all whom it may concern: “Religion, or grace, is like a brick-bat thrown against a wall” whose repellent property causes it to “fly off with the velocity of a tangent.” The first half of the last clause gives the exact idea in a condensed form—the residue is verbatim, and the only legitimate inference from the preceding remarks was, that nothing but “racing,” “cursing,” or “dancing” could at all interfere with the brick-bat of his comparison.

Now don't send me a full-grown moral lecture, in return for this sheriff-parson's sermon *in petto*—it was no fault of mine that the subject was so irreverently treated. While on collaterals, I must not omit to state, what I know will give you pleasure, namely—that my present abode is one in which the “Family altar” is erected, and the “morning and evening sacrifice” duly offered thereon by the major, who appears to be a sincere christian though his early religious education must have been somewhat defective.

Since my arrival he has received a letter from B., who apologizes to him for leaving me—states his “infinite regret at having been compelled so to do;” and adds,

that he "did not like to tell me (nor any one else, he might have said) *the truth*, for fear of alarming my very delicate sensibilities." "Nae doot mon," had I learned for the first time in the morning, that there had been fire in the next street the evening preceding, I should have imagined I had perished in the flames! After all, I believe he acted in strict accordance with his original plans; for they, I presume, may be much better traced by their developments than by such outlines as he pleases to give. Candor, not to say veracity, is altogether too vulgar a virtue for him to patronize, it seems, consequently he never descends to fact, when, by any species of legerdemain, fiction can be made to answer. Bah! Who would be so common-place? Any simpleton can tell the truth—it takes a man of talent, to invent and *sustain* a well-digested plausible falsehood—and don't "marble and mahogany" loom up beautifully in moonshine?

The length of this must be my apology for addressing it to more than one; when people have contracted the bad habit of writing *long* letters they cannot of course be expected to manufacture them in great profusion. If this reflection is not perfectly satisfactory, let the aggrieved party give this a second perusal and fancy it a duplicate; for that is about what both would have received had you been addressed "separately and singly." I think I have hit upon a plan now to silence all grumbling, for any sensible body would, I am sure, prefer keeping quiet to obeying such an injunction. Indeed I am far from certain that both together can make out *all* I have written; my autograph is none too legible at best, but I intend to bring in "Stumpie" for a share of the discredit on the present occasion.

Accept, dear uncle and sister, many thanks for your past kindness and best wishes for your future welfare.

Yours,

LOUISE.

~~~~~

LETTER II.

VIRGINIA HOSPITALITY, ETC.

TO MASTER S. J. S. *Stanley?*

*1st on top*  
Eagle Eyrie, Va., March—.

DEAR BROTHER STANLEY:

COULD you imagine half the pleasure your correspondence affords, you would never think of withholding it on account of "childish imperfections." When told that it contains the only intelligence received since I left New York, you will better appreciate its value and the warm welcome which always greets its arrival. A bright beam of sunshine, your last dispels for a while the deep gloom which has so long been accumulating round my heart; and I hail this renovation of life's dearest sympathies, as the welcome harbinger of better days to come. "Hope springs eternal in the human breast," were it otherwise, how many a pale brow on which "the tale is traced of young affections run to waste," would too ardently long to lay down its burning thoughts and restless imaginings, "on that couch from which there is no rising up; and repose its exhausted energies in that sleep which knows no waking." "Oh blindness to the future kindly given, that each may fill the circle marked by heaven!" The vail which con-

ceals the impenetrable future is to me indeed "a veil of mercy" which spares me many an hour of unavailing wretchedness.

I am sorry to find that grandmother so seriously disapproves what she is pleased to style the "madcap, hairbrained project" which I have carried into execution without leave or license; but what better could I have done under existing circumstances? The doctors said, "it was a sea-voyage, a southern residence, or the churchyard." For the latter, she will admit, I was not prepared, and the means adopted were the only ones in my power to secure either of the former; for she well knows I would never condescend to accept as a gracious gift, what I knew to be my right! I must confess, the consciousness of "youth and inexperience" *did* give me some needless uneasiness, though I hoped, by aid of my sables, ill health and consequent grave deportment, to pass for three or four years older than I really was (not expecting to remain long it made no difference, you know) but soon found all apprehension on *that* score entirely superfluous. Here at the south a *northern birth* is fully equivalent to more years than I have told; add to that the title of teacher or governess and you are at once installed in the honors of five-and-twenty. I could relate sundry anecdotes in proof of this assertion; but they are better omitted; for though strictly true, I know grandmother would credit the whole to my invention and set me down as an incorrigible quiz, wanting in respect to her gray hairs. Rather than incur such a suspicion, I will obey her injunction *a la lettre*, and report myself and pupils to the best of my ability; and she may rely upon the accuracy of the statement, but must not flatter herself that it will prove very agreeable.

The major, I am told, expresses a high opinion of me abroad, though I suspect his encomiums are little more than the echo of his oldest son's remarks. The latter is a young man about twenty, who having combined nearly all the talent of the family with a constitution too delicate for most masculine pursuits, has become a great genius in the estimation of his acquaintance, and a perfect oracle in that of his father. By way of underwriting his claims, I must say he wears his precocious honors with all humility; perhaps attending the law-school, in New Haven, has something to do with this; but he certainly does not judge causes by their effects, or he would arrive at a very different conclusion. One of his sisters is naturally "sprightly," and in a section of country where children are not supposed to confer a favor by "going to school and learning their books," would make quite a respectable scholar; as it is, that is a condescension hardly to be expected. As for the other daughters and the niece and ward of the Major, such is their inveterate dislike to "study," that never, of their own free will, would they tolerate in their presence any one who ever mentioned "books" in their hearing. Still their reason forces them to yield an "all-unwilling confidence" to one who it seems is never to be permanently honored with their affection. This distresses, and would mortify me exceedingly, did I not observe that, when "too sick to hear lessons," I am nursed by these same children with the utmost kindness, and am always first favorite through all the holidays except the two last, or last two, as your precisions will have it. But once in the school-room, a more stupid, ill-natured, captious set of ignoramuses never tried the patience of man or woman. Yet I manage to get along



by setting down all these annoyances to the charge of *an irksome confinement*. I cannot think of holding myself responsible for them, nor do I think it would be just to ascribe them to any natural perversity peculiar to the Misses under my care, but you will not fail to perceive, that under such a state of things, my present abode is destitute of every moral attraction which constitutes the charm of "home." How the system of domestic education ever came to be the choice of a man, too imbecile to control his children if he would, too indolent to do it if he could, I am utterly at a loss to determine. Probably he never troubled himself to weigh the respective merits of the different systems; and when he has kept his daughters in the school-room the usual number of years, will have as little uncomfortable consciousness, that they are not altogether as enlightened as is at all essential for the feminine gender. Ten or twelve negroes are accomplishments enough for any lady, where the reputation of wealth, instead of exciting the expectation of finding in its possessor every embellishment of which mind and manner is susceptible, supersedes the necessity of personal charms and mental culture altogether. "How many vile ill-favored faults look lovely in three hundred pounds a year!" Of the truth of this, the "niece and ward" is a case in point. She is as awkward a red-headed, blear-eyed, freckle-faced looking girl as you would wish to see; yet she is called "*pretty*," and is beginning to be quite a belle; and the fortunate winner of this peerless prize will, no doubt, have the reputation *abroad* of having made the "best match," and married "the *smartest* woman in the county," and the further satisfaction of finding a slattern and simpleton at home. However, I shall be

greatly obliged to any gentleman who will take this "heiress" of ten thousand off my hands; she is the oldest of my hopeful pupils, and wants a few days of being six months younger than myself. But I would not have *her* know this upon any account; for then instead of the very dignified pedagogical personage I now appear, I should be only a mere hoyden like herself. I fancy I hear grandmother's "enough without it is better," so take it for granted, I have her permission to devote the remainder of this sheet to your amusement; but must first remind you to acquit me of the blame of "evil-speaking," inasmuch as I did it "on compulsion."

Your questions, my dear brother, are neither "troublesome" nor "impertinent;" on the contrary, I regard them as so many evidences of an inquiring mind, and as such they are truly welcome. My observation is too limited to allow of my pronouncing *ex cathedra* upon all your queries; but I see and hear enough every day to convince me that in the manner of "local phrases," the "Old Dominion" may compete very successfully with the "Land of the Granite," or rather of "Steady Habits."

As proof is better than assertion, I will give a few examples by way of illustration. Just combine nominatives of every number and person with the third person singular of the verb—if you are not grammarian enough to do this, uncle J. or aunt K. will do it for you—and then if you do not "*reckon*" the arrangement superior to anything you are acquainted with, it will probably be for want of taste. Ask all questions with "*how cum*," answer disagreeable ones with "*yer got no sense*," apply "*heap*" and "*right smart*" to

number, quantity and quality indiscriminately; and I dare say you will like it "*mightily*," perhaps "*mighty well indeed*." It has ever been fashionable to graft foreign idioms upon our own meagre vernacular, and the "mother tongue" in this immediate vicinity, appears to have been considerably enriched by contributions "*toted*" here, from New Guinea "*I reckon*." And localisms are not, as at the north, confined almost exclusively to the lower classes; as near as I can learn, they are common to all, but exclusive to none.

The meed of "Hospitality" is doubtless well merited; individuals feel their own honor implicated when this state characteristic is called in question. Still I am inclined to think their much vituperated, and little understood, system of domestic institutions, has more to do with this reputation than any other cause, or than all other causes put together. Its natural effect is to exclude the yeomanry, or middling rank in society, and divide the residue into gentry and peasantry. Now should this *gentry* exercise, individually, no more hospitality, or liberality, than the same number of their compeers in the free states, still an unusual number congregated in a given space gives to that locality an advantage which no other possesses; and this, I believe, is the true exposition of "Virginia," or "Southern hospitality."

The "style of living" differs materially from that of the north, being much more expensive, though, as I think, far less comfortable. Bacon, not bread, is the "staff of life"—"fish, flesh and fowl," are made to supply the place of vegetables, most of which are excluded from the bill of fare, or placed there merely for show. Everything is *boiled* or *fried*—beefsteaks not

excepted—and comes to the table swimming in melted lard. Pastry and tea are seldom seen except upon great occasions; and the coffee is inferior in quality to what might be expected considering it is the constant beverage. Corn meal, cold water, and perhaps a little salt, are the only ingredients of bread; yet this is *bread* “*par excellence*,” that which you are accustomed to see, is denominated “*light-bread*,” and very lightly esteemed I do assure you in this part of the country. Indeed, I believe all Virginians think no mode of life but theirs, at all entitled to the name of living, and would, I dare say, be more surprised than offended, to find any one who had ever seen that to be of a contrary opinion. However, their excoriated pride would, no doubt, be mollified by the reflection, that a delicate invalid could, at best, be but a very indifferent judge of culinary affairs, and the probability that a person in robust health would form a very different estimate; but as the case now stands, they are welcome to my malediction upon the whole kitchen establishment—the “*melted lard*” more particularly.

Now in return for all this, I shall expect grandmother (“honor bright,” she instigated the catechism on *this head* did she not); to retract in due form the sentence so often passed on a certain culprit who shall be nameless, of “having ‘eyes and no eyes,’ and being *so stupid* in everything pertaining to cookery, that to the day of her death she would never know whether people lived by *eating* or not, unless she happened to die of starvation!” She is now bound in common justice to make explicit recantation. I should like, of all things, to see her and some of these Virginia paragons of housewifery, come in collision; till the state, and

family, and personal pride of each was fully aroused, and see their rising wrath contend with their native dignity and habitual courtesy—it would be “*one grand scene*,” worth all the farces ever written. But I can easily predict which side would bear off the honors of war; one who has a good temper, or a *good control of it*, has always an advantage on these occasions which practice alone can never give. And some of these Southern ladies (“oh tell it not in Gath”), do *sometimes*—merely to diversify the monotony of domestic life I suppose—get up little whirlwinds and tornadoes of passion which, while they last, would make the infernal Ate turn pale with affright; and in north latitude, forty-five, effectually close the doors of respectable society against these amateur representatives of the Furies ever after.

As this is a well known fact, I trust it *is* no slander, though it may be *gratuitous* “evil-speaking;” and while so many lay the “flattering unction to their souls,” that such conduct is the natural and *irrepressible* ebullition of the “Tropical Temperament,” I hope an obscure individual, like myself, may occasionally be allowed to “speak forth the words of truth and soberness,” and call things by their proper names. I have long been looking, not on domestic life but into it, and the root of bitterness is *there*; though this “*Tropical influence*,” is made “the mantle of charity” to cover “a multitude of sins.” A broad one it must needs be, to shelter all who take refuge under its folds. Poor Cancer! His place will soon be no sinecure I fear, unless some moral geographer arises to restore “the ancient landmarks! But when *parents* suffer their infant children, to vent, without check or restraint, the

“venom of their spleen,” alike on the venerably old and helpless young—the lordly master and lowly slave—what is to prevent their becoming fierce as the lightning in their hate, ruthless as the sword in their revenge? “Tropical temperament” indeed! Tropical *nonsense* more like! I tell you it is no such thing; it is *want of domestic discipline*, and early mental training! If it is the fault of nature and climate, how is it that when the season of childhood passes away and traits of character begin to *strengthen and deepen*, if the “still small voice” of conscience, or the dread laugh of derision, whispers you *are* miserable, and are making yourself *ridiculous*, the admonition will be heard and heeded; to the extent, at least, of repressing the troubled tide of feeling *in public*, though its waters of bitterness may be lavished in private, on the defenseless heads whose interest it is to conceal the deadly fountain that poisons all their well-springs of existence. People may look vastly wise, and talk immensely silly, as all this rigmarole about “tropical temperament” goes to prove. Where nature makes *one* intractable, ungovernable temper, mismanagement makes millions; and so you will find, should you live long enough to use your own eyes in preference to those of other people, and ever look beneath the surface of things.

I did not intend reading you such a homily, but now I am “in the vein,” it may not be amiss to throw out a few hints that will perhaps be of service in after life. On no subject in which woman is concerned, are men more solicitous than to discover the *temper* of their intended wives; this is *known*, consequently on no other are they more liable to be duped. Now if—instead of resorting to the meanness of intriguing with

intimates and servants, or the puerile little strategies whose object is generally detected and of course defeated—men would *observe* whether young ladies can deny themselves a desired article if necessary, or brook to be disappointed in their schemes, or find themselves second where they expected to be first, without putting themselves into what E. S. used to call “kerniption fits,” or practicing any of those half playful, half petulant airs which gentlemen seem to think so interesting in young, and so odious in old women, they would be apt to come much nearer the truth. *The habit of self-government is the thing*; with it, there is little danger that any body but the possessor will be incommoded, be the temper what it may; *without it* there is no security! Much seeming gentleness and amiability is all affected—much real softness and pliability may be indurated or frittered away, when brought fairly in contact with the harsher realities of life; and much undisputed “*good nature*” has no deeper root than gratified selfishness, and must eventually die for want of sustenance, or be kept alive at the expense of every body but the admired possessor. If a lady has too little self-control to restrict her taste in the purchase of what is *to her* unsuitable finery, or the *use of it* in an improper season—if she is too thoughtless to consult any body’s feelings or convenience but her own, or too selfish to relinquish any gratification in her power to obtain—depend upon it, all *her* amiability, whether real or assumed, is of the kind that will “perish with the using;” though you may watch till doomsday, if you choose, without witnessing, unless by accident, any palpable outburst of temper. *You* are not going to see it if it occurs twenty times a day; for simple as women are, they are generally

shrewd enough to "fool men to the top of their bent" in this matter; and those who do, will not be so mean, or so disinterested, as to play the informer, at the expense of being considered, by you and all your associates, as envious rivals or unprincipled slanderers for the balance of their days. Some one who knows how uniformly men treat *advice* as witches do their prayers (that is to say, "read them backwards"), and is malicious enough to wish you entangled in the very net against which you are warned, *may* do it; but *I* would hardly be magnanimous enough to tell a gentleman that his innamorata's name was Mary, if he fancied it Jane. However, should I chance to be mistaken about the "Tropics;" it is to be hoped that you, a child of colder climes, will never become so ardent in imagination, as to suspect my vision of being sufficiently acute to look through a vista of ten or fifteen years (not to mention some five hundred miles), and consider these remarks, personal and invidious.

This is a very long and singularly inappropriate letter to a boy; but you will not always be a child, you know, and the moralizing which seems so dull to you now, may become interesting hereafter; more especially should the hand that traced it ere then be cold in death.

Give my best respects to grandmother, and all who take an interest in my welfare; tell cousin Anne I have a great curiosity to see how her new name would look at the extreme verge of a sheet of "imperial;" but no yankee chicanery about the thing, I am apt to grumble exceedingly at paying postage on blank paper. And if Evelyn and cousin Kate are really going to Ipswich they ought at least to bid me farewell, before they get so learned that it will become necessary to convene all



the faculty of William and Mary's to explain and expound, and reduce their epistles to the level of my comprehension.

But in future, do not you, my dear brother, say anything more about "our old place."—I knew indeed that some such disposition must be made of it; but not what exquisite pain it would give me to know that the house of my father had passed into the hands of a stranger. And never, oh never forget, that to me the only charm that hallowed the spot, was the memory of his buried love and the assurance of your living affection! That time and distance may have no power to sever the chain that binds us to each other, is the fervent prayer of your sister,

LOUISE.

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### LETTER III.

#### DESULTORY GOSSIP.

TO J. S., ESQ.

*Eagle Eyrie, Va., Dec. 20.—*

MY KIND UNCLE:

YOUR last has been so long neglected that you may conclude I intend giving it "the go-by" entirely; but instead of witnessing any such wicked resolve, no single week has passed since its reception, without inflicting the stings of remorse for this sin of omission.

The hackneyed excuse, "nothing to write," is *all* I have to offer; and if that is not a good, I am sure it is a lasting one, and just as true now as ever. I know no

positive advantage to be derived from the discussion of my "health;" it is rather better than it was, but how can any one expect to be *well*, where ague-and-fever constitutes (as I believe it does) a part of the air, soil, and climate? To say the truth, I neither have nor expect ever to have *perfect* health, so the less said about it the better; yet without the assistance of some such commonplace topic, full one half this sheet must remain a perfect blank; which, once for all, allow me to say I utterly detest.

You probably expect to learn where I shall reside the ensuing year, and I should be glad to know myself; but it will most likely be at some point in the vicinity of New York, which will afford the advantage of sea breezes. I cannot tell precisely when I shall leave; but expect to remain till spring, and pass most of the intervening time fulfilling sundry engagements in the visiting line.

In two days more I shall be out of purgatory—you good Protestants are wont to sneer at this as fabulous, but I believe there are circumstances under which the most pragmatist might be convinced; and if ever I find it in my heart to imperil my happiness in like manner again, it shall be *for some object*, not merely to prolong an existence so worthless as mine. "Delightful task" indeed! Thompson would have been glad "to eat his own words," in less than twenty-four hours, by way of reprieve, had he ever submitted them to the test of experiment. At any rate, it is a *delight* I am very willing to dispense with; and have not the slightest objection to turning out the oldest of my young "hopefuls," and passing over the residue to the contemptible little son of Bacchus who officiates as music-master in

the family and neighborhood. If their father chooses to commit the minds, and manners, and morals of his daughters to such a companionship, it is no concern of mine, you know. And after all it makes no difference—they are not sent to school to learn, only to be kept out of the way till they are old enough to “come out” and get married. If this is sarcastic, it is truth only that makes it severe.

As my direction promises to be precarious after the current year, you will oblige me by requesting Mr. G. to discontinue my subscription until further orders. And if he insists on a literal interpretation of the “arrearages” clause, be so good as to advance whatever may be necessary to release me from its “durance vile;” incurred as follows. This State tolerates nothing less than five dollar bills; and not feeling exactly able to pay five, where only three were required, I inclosed (and sent by private conveyance as far as New York) a quarter eagle and fifty cents in silver, supposing—ignorant sinner that I was—that no postage would be levied on a communication addressed to a Post-Master, for the residue of the route; but the Post-Office Department had to be sustained, and the unfortunate aforesaid to contribute nearly half its contents to that laudable object. Don't you think now, I must possess an uncommonly forgiving disposition, to be scribbling nonsense this very blessed moment, for no earthly use but to increase the revenue?

I have not heard from Massachusetts for some months, this is partly chargeable, no doubt, to my having allowed Evelyn's last to lie so long “on the shelf.” The truth is, I am serving them all to the same sauce they have been treating me with ever since I could remember; and

don't think I should feel any compunctious visitings on that score, if *her* letter were to lie over till the Fourth of July next. I have a strong notion of giving her a practical illustration of the old adage—"it's a poor rule that don't work both ways." But I suspect I am, at best, no great favorite in that quarter; for beside compromising the olden dignity by condescending to enact governess, and being so profanely irreverent as not to make a most profound salaam at every mention of the "Pilgrim Fathers," I had once the effrontery to ridicule some of their scientific machines, yecept "Female Seminaries," and express some apprehension lest the yankee genius of "improvement" should steal a march upon me, seize the Falls of Niagara and convert them into "*a very eligible water privilege*" before I get a peep at that world of waters and rainbows. Nor is this "the extent of my offending;" for it seems by Stanley's last (they surely keep "a journal where my faults are noted") that some time, "so long since that the memory of man runneth not to the contrary," I had the foolhardiness to assert that "the rocks and streams," "the hills and valleys of New England" were worth more "to point a paragraph and adorn a tale" than anything else; and what was worse, the impertinence to inquire if cousin Anne were in training to canvass votes for the next presidential campaign, that she was so sedulously studying popularity, under madam "the Dominie," and learning of her, the most approved method of playing the hypocrite *secundum artem*, so as to make domestics, factory girls, and all of that genus, believe, no one ever doubted, that all men (and women too) were born "free and equal!" Of course I never dreamed that this persiflage could offend, but fear it has.

I had almost forgotten to say that the interesting, beautiful, agreeable nondescript, who accompanied me half-way here, called five or six weeks since, ostensibly to see me, but really to get a few days' board and lodging gratis—an exploit for which he is eminently qualified by nature and art. He said he was on his way to Georgia, Alabama, and Mississippi; but would return and attend me home if I would remain till April. Really, were I ever so much at a loss for a *compagnon du voyage*, I should hardly be over hasty in committing my precious self to the care of his worshipful authorship!

Please tender my compliments, and the sight of this *valuable evidence* that theory does sometimes accord with practice—to such of your family as feel interested in either; and accept for yourself much love and many, *many* thanks for your unremitting kindness to the isolated orphan.

LOUISE.

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## LETTER IV.

### LIGHT AND SHADE.

TO A LADY IN VIRGINIA.

N. Y., Sept.—

MY DEAR MADAM:

Your kind favor, scrawled all over with post-marks and re-directions, has come to hand at last; and you cannot think how delighted I am that your interest in the erratic wanderer has survived so many months of separation.

You ask, my dear friend, "Did you revisit your home?" No, I did not; there is little there that I wish to behold—there is *much* that I desire not to look upon!

The print of stranger footsteps now is in  
 My childhood's haunts! Dull, cold voices too  
 Are on the summer air, once thrilling through  
 Those halls to tones of mirth, or fond affection.  
 And, oh, they fall like discord on a heart,  
 That was, an instrument attuned at first  
 To sweetest harmony; but made so soon,  
 And often, to respond to one rude touch,  
 That it can breathe, oh never, never more  
 In music as 'twas wont; but ever  
 And anon, in wild, half-broken tones,  
 Pours forth a requiem sad, to melody  
 Departed!

I might not brook to tread my father's halls.  
 An alien from his doors—a stranger on  
 His very hearth! I could not stand among  
 The spirit's loved and unforgotten scenes—  
 The complicated, countless things, that twine  
 Around the heart from childhood up to age—  
 Without the passing tribute of a sigh  
 To all I loved, to all I lost; and cold  
 Unsympathizing eyes were there, to bend  
 Upon a brow, whose thoughts are tears—  
 A tide too strong for pride to stem, or them to scan.  
 Away, *alone, unseen*, I turn to weep!

But notwithstanding the "one fatal remembrance," I do not always enact Melpomene. There are moments, and those neither few nor far between, when you would suppose me the lineal descendant of Thalia, could you hear my light laugh floating on the breeze, in full chorus with that of the idlest set of vagrants who ever roamed the world in search of summer and sunshine, from the days of Will. Shakspeare, the poacher, till mine.

The season has passed rapidly, and, for the most part, delightfully, scrambling over hedges and ditches, flying from fresh water to salt—from salt water to fresh—in pursuit of health and butterflies, sea-shells and wild-flowers; and I have caught the goddess though the insect eluded my grasp, and laid up in store bright memories of happiness to illumine the dark vistas of the future, though I failed to preserve a cabinet of curiosities to rise up in judgment as proof positive of my vagabond propensities.

I fear my *cidevant* pupils would think me a sad romp could they see me now, that the supernumerary years, to which I had no claim, are dismissed upon parole, and my dignity cashiered for an indefinite period; while I am rambling “o’er lake and lawn and lea,” happy in the conscious ability to revel in their respective beauties, unmolested by a learned lecture on the propriety of “toting” about an ugly stone or hideous reptile because it happens to have an uglier name. Through the magnificent drapery which invests creation, I behold radiations of that Divinity which presides over all; every item in its folds is a gem of worth, a thing of fair flowers or soft fragrance, of bright leaves and gorgeous coloring—worthy to be the work of a God! But if name in the place of feeling—the varnish of art for the gloss of nature—words, mere words subversive of thought, must be allowed to cast their blighting spell on the fair flower’s loveliness—if it must be botanized, and analyzed, and sentimentalized, take it away—it is no longer the peerless little gift of a munificent Creator; you have degraded it to a thing of art, and forms, and names (one can hardly spell, and whose pronunciation

I never expect to achieve) you are welcome to your handiwork—take it away!

Thank fortune, I am now free to abuse the encyclopedia and “king’s English” to my heart’s content; for, “heaven help our worthy chaperons, they are by far the wildest of the party, and there is neither botanist, nor naturalist, nor journalist among us; nor do I believe the whole *posse comitatus* could produce an album on pain of excommunication from caste? While there is no “chiel among us takin’ notes,” there is no danger of being “written down,” so every one is free to “gang his own gait” and enjoy himself after his own fashion; and “the saddest emotion our bosom e’er knows is pity for those who are wiser than *we*;” more especially for poor hag-ridden mortals who are all their lifetimes in bondage to a set of outlandish fellows called Murray, Blair, Walker, Kaimes, and so on *ad infinitum*. It can’t be denied but this life of ours does approximate rather nearly to the savage state; but then I always did feel a decided predilection for that, whenever either of the aforesaid clansmen, albums, or botanists crossed my path. It seems to me they have no business in such a glorious world as this, where the hand of Omnipotence has inscribed a poetry of its own, that leaves its records on the heart. Let the flying tourist and enervate wanderer in steamboats and carriages pass—its nobler passages are too *recherche* for him, they must be *felt* as well as seen, *loved* before they can be appreciated—but let him who will, *tarry* till the spirit of the place has passed into his heart and lives again in his song! Till then let Genius stand reproved in the majesty of a Superior Presence, and Art retire humbled and abashed



from the scene ere the spirit of Beauty mock and deride his impotent efforts to copy her works or embody her loveliness.

You think me an enthusiast on the scenery of New York; but the cradle of my infancy, the home of my childhood, it is no common spot; and though from the very hearthstone of my father, there breathed the sirocco of a desert heart on his child, it could not wholly blight a spirit alive to the bland and invigorating influence of nature, as exhibited in *her* earth and *her* skies: and with these I could ever hold communion when told that the avenues of human sympathy were closed against me!

It may be that this faculty too was given for my bane—well be it so—if the pleasure to which it gives birth be as evanescent as exquisite, the better the reason I should haste to enjoy while I may! But a day like this sadly disconcerts the scheme and forces me to reflect—on my own gorgeous life-visions, prematurely dissipated—a noble brother, “my beautiful, my brave,” sacrificed on the shrine of avarice and unnatural prejudice; and, worse than all, the nothing I have done—the little I can ever do, to redeem the promise of the child to the sleeping infant. The very effort seems like the osier instructing the oak how to keep the perpendicular! Yet it shall be made, though all my untold, unsated powers of enjoyment, should be molten down into one stern power to suffer and endure; for henceforth it is not in the cloud or the storm that I look to feel the full bitterness of my doom. When the meridian sun lavishes his beams, unconscious that one human heart is breaking in a world irradiated by his smile—when the “electric chain is struck mid the garish splendor of the

festal hall—then, then it is that I shall *realize* how sad it is to feel the winter of age settling down forever on the heart, while the first summer of youth is yet bright on my brow; and *think* how much more desolate had been the lone, lone dwellers of the ark, had they returned to find a depopulated world rejoicing in its young luxuriance and wearing its accustomed garniture. But no—Nature in all her wide domains was mourning for her hapless children, the glorious, though degenerate “sons of God and daughters of men,” and in that silent sympathy there was companionship. Yet oh, how little is there of it, where the votaries of fashion and pleasure most love to congregate—how few of all, who “flatter, smile, and woo,” can bide the “dark hour” or listen to the querulous accents of despondence without hinting, that if there be “but one step between the sublime and ridiculous,” there is less than one between the sentimental and lackadaisical: few, indeed, “and by conflicting powers forbidden here to meet,” or I should not now resort to a medium like this, and feel how inadequate is the channel to convey the full, deep tide of thought.

“*The gods avert*” all such “accurst familiars,” “thick coming fancies, and exquisite sensibilities from you and yours, is the earnest wish of your incongruous “two-souled” friend,

LOUISE.

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#### FAREWELL TO A FRIEND.

Thou wilt “go home”—then speed thy way,  
 No voice of mine shall bid thee “stay;”  
 Though years may pass, nor bring a smile  
 So soft as thine—so free from guile.

The shades of home—what flowers more fair  
 Can earth display than blossom there?  
 Say, wilt thou there, the men'ry keep  
 Of her, who has no home to seek!

Sept. 25.

ISOLE.

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## LETTER V.

### ADVICE AND REMONSTRANCE,

TO A BROTHER.

O—, N. Y., May, 1833.

MY DEAR BROTHER:

I HAVE just received a letter from Evelyn, in which she speaks of your recent meeting and the wish you then expressed to hear from me oftener. Rest assured it is not indifference that holds my hand, or neglect that restrains my pen:

“My brother! Though my heart is cold  
 And tame, to what 'twas wont to be;  
 Still to the music of thy name  
 Vibrates one chord, which yet is free  
 From the benumbing influence  
 Which hath in torpor wrapped each sense.  
 The only heart that ever turned  
 With undiminished love to mine—  
 Which *never* my affection spurned;  
 But loves me still—is thine!  
 And oh, how sweet to know that yet  
 In this cold world is beating still,  
 One heart, which will not mine forget  
 Though darkly rise the clouds of ill:  
 But thou, my brother—thou, whose path  
 A sister's fondness deemed would be  
 Far from the sullen gloom which hath

Long o'er her own formed heavily—  
 The promise of whose gifted mind  
 I've marked with all a sister's pride;  
 Deeming the riches there enshrined  
 Would mock thy power to hide—  
 That yet, around thy cherished name,  
 Some future day of pride should see  
 The fresh and fadeless wreath of fame  
 Entwined—eternally:  
 Oh, *must* these dreams be vain, and thou  
 Be doomed to share so dark a fate;  
 And thy aspiring spirit bow,  
 And droop beneath misfortune's weight?  
 Ah no, a milder doom be thine,  
 A brighter star arise for thee;  
 Then shall my spirit not repine  
 Whate'er my destiny!  
 If bright, or dark, it matters not,  
 Few look with interest on my lot;  
 For I am one, whose memory  
 Soon dies within the hearts of others;  
 I care not—it is nought to me  
 So I but live in thine, my brother's!  
 If cold oblivion's breath should sweep  
 From hearts I love all trace of me,  
 Oh, still in thine, my brother, keep  
 Undimmed, the memory of one,  
 To whom this world could never give  
 A dearer hope to rest upon,  
 Than this:"

But who would rather sacrifice even this, than the hope, so long and so fondly cherished, of one day seeing your name enrolled among the noble, the wise, and the mighty of the land.

Say not this is an enthusiast's dream—it *must* be fulfilled. I know it will cost much exertion—what of that—does your present employ promise a life of indolent repose? I *know* there are difficulties to encounter, obstacles to remove—they must be met, firmly and

fearlessly! I also know, that I am sinning, past hope of absolution, against the dictates of "*common prudence*"—what then? Should I call down the anathemas of all her votaries, on my own reckless ambition, shall I be lightly turned, think you, from a purpose, I would give all but the fee-simple of my soul to accomplish? You know it is not in the nature of "things possible!" Your prospective career has roused even Evelyn from her torpor—*her* lethargy is over—the "iron gyves," which ill-judging kindness bound round every faculty of her nature, are fallen off—she stands up once more, in the native dignity of a mind regenerated, redeemed, disenthralled! And most nobly has she come forward to break down, with her own hand, the barrier which an indiscriminating and unjustifiable partiality strove to erect between her and her nearest of kin! Let no allusion of ours recall its existence. True, the impressions of a lifetime are not to be effaced at will; but if we cannot forget, let us remember only to love and admire the true nobility of soul that would not be debased! Many a one that rises the prouder for the conflict with oppression might utterly succumb under the enervating influence of inertia and weak indulgence; but such a one is not she—in any plan that can be devised for your benefit, *her* co-operation is certain, yours only is doubtful. If that is not wanting, I care not now with whose opposition I may have to contend; but I recoil, with the cold, sickening sensation of despair, from the apprehension that *you* may shrink from the necessary exertion—that your once lofty spirit may have become assimilated to your lowly destiny. But no, it is not, cannot be so! Evelyn speaks of your "manly form and sedate aspect," and I know the source of such

premature gravity all too well, not to believe *that* youthful brow, "so calm yet sad," a better index to your heart, than your tongue ever was, when it reported you "contented" (for shame!) and "cheerful" in the condition to which a narrow-minded policy has consigned you. I know not in whose sagacity that measure originated; but I do know I had rather that man had gone to the grave than my darling brother to the anvil. Be he who he may, he shall find "I bide my time" and will not always brook to be thwarted in my purpose!

I love you, dear Stanley, and always shall, be your occupation what it may; but I cannot bear to see you sacrificed thus! I cannot endure the idea that my father has no son to give back to the world that promise of pre-eminent usefulness and ornament which sleeps in his early grave! You bear his name, will you make no effort to rescue it from oblivion? Resolve that you *will*, and that resolve will be a prophecy that shall work its own fulfillment. It requires no small moral courage, I know, for a boy like you to act in open defiance of the express will and pleasure of those he has been accustomed to honor and obey; but when ascendancy over the mind of a child is made the instrument of his oppression—*it is time it should cease*. State your feelings and intentions modestly but firmly; then if you find them ultimately disapproved, give the dissentient to understand, that by "*advice*" people sometimes mean *concurrency*; and that you do not consider asking a man's opinion a positive promise to abide by his decision.

If Mr. D. is the gentleman you and Evelyn represent him, there will be no opposition on his part; but if Shylock-like, he insists on "the letter of the bond," his

pound he must have—time is of more value to you than money. Settle it in your own mind that nothing shall deter you from your purpose, and *Industry*, ardent, inflexible and untiring, will bring it to a successful issue. With such splendid names as Franklin, Jefferson, Chancellor Kent, and William Wirt, inscribed by its hand on the page of your country's history, say if you can that my scheme is chimerical, my expectation hopeless! But as familiar examples are always most potent, allow me to remind you, that the distinguished Prof. S——is said once to have learned the tanner and currier's trade; and your much, and justly admired Mr. E. that which you are now acquiring. *They* had no incentive of an honorable name on the wane; yet where are they now? "*What man has done man may do,*" so do not sit down and compile a volume of excuses for inaction; nor is it at all essential for you to soil any fair white paper endeavoring to convince me, that to you, especially, the path to all honorable distinction is perfectly inaccessible. I shall not be persuaded any more than yourself! Up then and be doing, or you will lose both time and labor. What if the hill of science be steep and high—the ascent toilsome and difficult—"knowledge is power," and the acquisition paramount to the exertion. Assertions to the contrary are, in my opinion, nothing more than the "It is naught, it is naught," of the buyer, or the "sour grapes" of the disappointed aspirant. But whatever else you may do, do not waver and hesitate and procrastinate till it is indeed too late. I have taken this preliminary off your hands. Two years of doubt and indecision are enough to waste upon any subject, and I have bestowed more than that on the one before you.

What if you should suppose I overrate your talents, does it follow of course that my estimate is incorrect? You will neither respect me more, nor love me better, when I say that in years that are passed, I have often excited and exasperated you to the utmost, in order to see what stamina you were of—but it is even so—I have done this, and the result was perfectly satisfactory: you are fully adequate to the task imposed. What! shall men cast out upon the world in the very hour of their birth, indebted even to charity for the very names by which they designate themselves, shall they reach forth their hands and grasp the highest honors their country can give; and will *you*, gifted with the might of intellect, lie down in contented obscurity, and suffer the thick-coming clouds of oblivion to envelope all your name and race? My brother! I desire nothing of you I would not gladly perform myself—I ask you to encounter no difficulty I would not grapple with fearlessly, yes joyfully! I urge you to no effort it would not be my pleasure and pride to accomplish, if I only might. Might I but write Louis instead of Louise, then should *my* hand and foot soon be “in that stern strife which leads to life’s high places;” but this may not be—upon *you* devolves the right to become your father’s worthy successor in more than name. Nerve your spirit to this, bring every faculty, moral and physical, to bear upon this point, and it will be attained.

Never stop though to quarrel with me for giving everybody’s thoughts a tongue, in rating a trade as inferior to a liberal profession. I do assure you, I never made the world, but merely took it as I found it; and shall never dream of setting up for a reformer unless furnished with most authentic credentials of my divine mission. As



these are not forthcoming, the world will e'en have to "go on as it used to do when it was a boy;" for I have no intention of giving it my supervision.

Above all let no pecuniary considerations distress you; Evelyn has avowed her intention of "eating no longer the bread of idleness," and you know when once decided she is fixed as the north star. She will soon "leave school, and go south, or west, to see if she can turn her acquirements to any account." In no case will she "any longer appropriate to her own exclusive use, funds which should be common to all; though if you accept, she will still *receive* them, and thus cajole his wisdom, the executor, who has the impertinence to suppose that minors cannot possibly have arrived at "years of discretion." I hold it a specially wise and merciful interposition of Providence that law and lawyers have been raised up conferring it, *at a certain age*, on some people who might otherwise never have attained it at all.

The *minimum* of our father's estate, which was, you know, assigned to me, has long been devoted, in thought, to this object; what better use can you make of your share? It is not capital enough to establish you securely in any lucrative business; but I have ascertained from the best authorities, that one with your resources at command, is amply furnished for a professional as well as collegiate course. Think calmly of all this, and weigh well your advantages before you weakly determine to reject them.

Evelyn intimates that you report yourself as "very deficient in penmanship," by way of excuse for being so idle a correspondent; if this be so, why the greater the need for *practice*—the wider the field for cultivation,

the more imperious the necessity that impels you onward. Never let your aversion to anything get the mastery of your better judgment. Are you a man, and succumb to such a womanly weakness? Brother of mine, and suffer the iron heel upon your neck to grind you forever in the dust? Son of your father, and lie down in hopeless apathy and imbecility, when all that is noble and endearing in life, call upon you to awake to the sleepless energy of thought?

Your own and ever affectionate

SISTER.

### ELEGIAC LINES.

LET others trace the obsequious line  
 Along the marble's cold expanse;  
 The only eyes that ever spoke to mine  
 Affection's tale in every glance;—

The only voice whose accents never fell  
 Like discord on my youthful ear—  
 The only breast whose gentle swell  
 Told what a fount of love was welling near;—

The one loved hand that oft clasped mine,  
 Or lay in silent blessing on my head;  
 My noble father, these were thine,  
 And thou, hast long been with the dead.

I know thy smile was all the light  
 That lay upon my pathway here:—  
 But words—vain words on marble, will they  
 Wake the sleeper in the sepulcher?

Let others trace the hackneyed line,  
 And measure grief by rules of art;  
 Thy mem'ry hath a holier shrine,  
 'Tis graven deeper on the heart:

And ruthless time shall never sweep  
 From mem'ry's page one trace of thee,  
 Nor chill the love that bends to weep  
 O'er all it lost in losing thee.

Sleep on—I would not have thee heed  
 Of sorrowing heart and weary lot the tale,  
 That stranger eyes oft turn to read  
 In my dim eye and cheek so deadly pale.

'Twould shade thy angel brow to learn  
 How lowly is thy children's lot;—  
 How fondly e'en in youth they yearn  
 For that blest home where care comes not.

Still! be thou still! I would not break  
 The silence that should linger here—  
 Sleep on—sleep on—I would not wake  
 The dreamer in this lowly sepulcher!

Aug., 1833.

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## LETTER VI.

### SUPPLEMENT TO THE PRECEDING ONE.

O—— N. Y., Nov. 1833.

DEAR STANLEY:

THE offer of a private conveyance induces me to commence a hasty reply to your last, though it is "past ten," and my health scarcely equal to late hours after social excitement; but when your interest is at stake, mental and physical exhaustion should alike be forgotten; what are they, when laid in the balance with aught that can minister to your pleasure, or your profit?

Your last, my dear brother, has given me more pleasure than I had experienced for months before its

reception; for it tells me what I most desired to learn. Thank God, your mind *is not* bowed down to the level of your fortunes—you “do feel their degradation” though you “fear every effort to escape, would only ensure a mortifying defeat!” But let me ask you my dear brother, do you expect to shelter yourself behind your dark doctrine of “Fate,” and silence the restless spirit in your own bosom, and the untiring remonstrance of your far off sister, with “*It is my destiny?*” Believe it not, while the free spirit God has given continues to animate your form, it will rebel against the tyranny that is trampling its aspiring energies in the dust. Hope it not, when the clods of the valley lie heavy on a heart that beats only for you, the voice that now implores you to be just to yourself, will be silent forever, but not till then will I relinquish the one hope that has long been my sole guiding star, through all the dark maze of a wayward existence.

I know nothing of the piratical worthy you quote; but as to his gift of second sight, excuse me if I am—not quite an audacious misbeliever! His talents had no doubt been denied their legitimate exercise, until the fever of the heart grew, as it often does, almost to madness; and then he brooded over the history of piracy, till the charm which danger always flings round hazardous enterprise was converted into a “spell;” and the deluded victim of a distempered fancy, took the most efficient means of accomplishing his own high destiny. The same causes would, in nine cases out of ten, undoubtedly produce the same effect; at least I see nothing mysterious in this thing called *second sight* to puzzle the learned or unlearned withal! It seems to me neither more nor less than the phospho-

rescence emitted by the oscillations between genius and madness; and what is there so very inexplicable in all that? There are other mental phenomena which would, if well considered and only a little less common, seem equally strange: as, for instance, how any one that *is sane* can expect to continue so, if he persists in forcing his brain into an unnatural channel, and denying it its proper and essential aliment. A fish, or a bird *might* do better in some other element, but I doubt it; at all events rivers do sometimes run clear, but who ever saw a canal that did?

I can tell you what I have seen though, and that was, an amalgam of wounded pride, reserve, and irresolution, vainly trying to shuffle off all responsibility upon "*destiny*;" but never tell me again that you "*were not born*" to emulate the honored Sons of Industry and Intellect. What if they have achieved "an eminence so lofty," I do not insist that you shall hurl them from spheres which are filled, nobly and well. I am glad to hear you acknowledge their supremacy; for, in these days, when every one is trying to take precedence of his betters, it is no small merit to know one's place and keep it; but are you *quite sure* you have found yours? Never fear though, that I intend nominating you for the presidency this year, or next—it is not the proper time—but I do intend to convince you that your present occupation is one in which you can never hope to be happy, or even contented. This ought to be easily done, after your own admission that "you were always averse to the business," that it "is not congenial to your taste, and becomes every day more and more irksome to your feelings;"—*because* you are conscious of "gradually descending lower and lower in the scale

of social and intellectual beings." And yet you pause, and fear! Why not hope? And how, with such a confession on your lips, will you parry the question, or excuse, even to yourself, the unmanly weakness of remaining a moment longer than necessary, in a thralldom so degrading? You cannot, you will not!

Mr. D. certainly merits all your encomiums; "when self the balance shakes, 'tis rarely right adjusted," and even I must admit that his proposition is not only liberal, but expedient. I had forgotten, until he suggested it, that "a sudden change from active to sedentary life, might injure your health and prove ruinous to our schemes." Let your improvement of the time and advantages placed at your disposal, evince that his generosity has not been lavished on an undeserver. Use them, my dear brother, as if every moment lost were a fortune squandered. It is, I know, unwelcome advice which says to youth—absent yourself from the young and gay, and therefore I will not give it; but attach yourself closely to books, and you will find that happiness does not consist in the noisy mirth of rude associates. To me, the most exceptionable feature in Mr. D——'s plan, is, that it must necessarily detain you another year or more in New England; for, in sober earnest, I do dread your "falling unawares" into the yankee custom from time immemorial; namely, entering into the most important contract in your power to make, one too, which cannot be annulled without forfeiture of your reputation as an honorable man, *at an age* when the law nullifies pecuniary transactions, on account of "immaturity of judgment." These "long engagements" are objectionable in every point of view; they hang like dead weights on any enter-

prise that requires the undivided energies of character, are generally contracted with a man's, or rather a *boy's* equal, if not superior, in years; and eventually become irksome to one party in proportion as their perpetuity is indispensable to the happiness of the other. I did not remain quite long enough in Virginia, to imbibe the southern notion, that a man should be old enough for his wife's father, neither do I give in to the New England system (as elucidated by practice), that it is immaterial which has the seniority. "*Il n'y a que New York que toujours la raison;*"\* a man *should* be older than his wife; though, were I lawgiver, ten years should be about the limit of disparity. Here at the north, *five* would answer; but a few years more or less are not so important after all, as some other matters. *Now* you cannot expect free admission into your former and appropriate circle, yet no member of any other can be to you a desirable companion, least of all a female. Some there may be, beautiful in person and fascinating in manner; but were they well-born, intelligent, refined, pure and *high-minded*, as the companions of my brother should be, they would not be found in a subordinate sphere. But allowing the lady to be the sublimated essence of all feminine attraction, a matrimonial entanglement, whether near or more remotely prospective, would in your case, prove the death blow to all lofty aspiration; and you would, when too late, hate the innocent cause of your blighted hopes, with an intensity, bitter as shame, disappointment, and crushed ambition could engender!

But enough of this—I fear you have already had a

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\* It is only New York that is always in the right.

surfeit of good advice, so to change the subject, allow me to say how much I was gratified by the improvement evinced in your last. With the exception of a few grave errors in orthography, and some trifling ones in punctuation and direction—the latter intended to be quizzical, I suppose, though the *exterior* is not exactly the place for such things—the matter and manner of the whole would have been creditable to almost any one. Indeed I was quite amused at the *sang-froid* with which you state your grievances, and inquire “where I picked up so much outlandish lingo”—why among beaux, novels, newspapers, and such like good company—where else do you suppose? You know very well that I know nothing in fact of *la langue Francois*; but must not expect me to mend my ways, or regret all the study “these pestilent phrases” have cost you. Did it never occur to you that they were inserted for that very purpose, not for display, or to exercise the yankee prerogative of “*guessing*?” The sentinels on the ramparts of the “King’s English” do, to be sure, declaim, as becomes them, in a style of lofty invective against having the immaculate purity of vernacular corrupted by these foreign interlopers; but I am not responsible for their introduction, and now that they are admitted, it is nearly as necessary they should be made to pass for exactly what they are worth, and no more, as to know that two and two make four.

As a sojourner among “the everlasting yankee nation,” it is reasonable to suppose you have an extra horror of impostors, wooden nutmegs, and other abominations; so compassionating your situation, I insert, in a pocket lexicon, a leaf from Webster’s Spelling-book,



which will assist in unmasking a few of these formidable incognitæ.

The former, I know, you will value more as my gift, than for its own intrinsic beauty or value, but permit me to remind you that it is designed for *use*, not show, and entreat, that henceforth you will suffer no word with whose orthography, and import, you are not thoroughly *au fait*, to escape you, until both are indelibly impressed on your memory. If you were to keep a common-place book, and transcribe, in a legible hand, every word and definition for which you had occasion to look, you would soon find the habit beneficial in more ways than one. Among other things, it would insure some little practice in penmanship; and should your next specimen exceed the last, as much as that did its predecessor, I shall soon have occasion to blush for such a heathenish looking scrawl as this. I am something mortified as the case now stands, and can sympathize very feelingly with your "stiff fingers;" mine will not readily relax after this long contraction.

Past twelve, so good night, and pleasant dreams to you, my dear brother.

*Votre Sœur* LOUISE.

### EPITHALAMIUM.

WRITTEN FOR A YOUNG FRIEND.

Now joy be thine, my noble brother,  
For thou hast won a gifted bride;  
And the heart that never loved another  
Is throbbing fondly at thy side.

The charm of youth may not endure,  
Earth's finest gold has some alloy;  
But that trusting heart, so high and pure,  
Is wealth—and thine—I give thee joy!

## LETTER VII.

## METAPHYSICS AND OTHER VAGARIES.

H. ——— *Mass., Jan., 1834.*

DEAR EVELYN:

A LITTLE gossip or nonsense is, you know, very refreshing, but the duplicate is intolerable; so I shall abandon "interesting items" to the regular residents, throw the reins to my good steed, *La Plume*, and just follow wherever its mother instinct leads.

You ask for a portrait of your friend—a careless outline is all I can give—and should that displease, you must blame the curiosity that procured a bad likeness, not the unskillful limner. She talks, I think, less nonsense than most people—and that is no small compliment, considering that she talks all the time—has some amusing, but no bad, and many estimable qualities, for which I esteem her highly. And then, again, she piques herself upon some others which she has not;—firmness of character, for instance, to which a weather-vane has just as much pretension, and rather more, for that does stand still when it rusts down.

She looks upon all young ladies as her special proteges, and an admirable *chaperone* she would make, for that is her *forte*; but having assumed the style and title of governess long before my schoolmates came out, she must excuse me from addicting myself to leading-strings just now. Yet none the less for that do I feel obliged by the interest she takes in my welfare, despite a lurking suspicion that it is given chiefly to *your sister*; and a little owing perhaps to my being *such a gem of a listener*.

But, give up Shakspeare, and Walter Scott, with all their world of bright imaginings—cut the acquaintance of Bulwer and his most magnificent villains—see nothing charming in Halleck—be blind to the beauties of Irving, and Cooper, and Sedgwick, and “Paulding the witty”—no, I can’t think of the thing!

Nobody but a father or husband should ever control me in this, and in the latter case, I think any sensible legislature would grant a divorce. So you see mine is a hopeless case—I am quite incorrigible!”

“Illusions! *illusions!* exclaims the philosopher—yes ILLUSIONS; but without them, *how many* would know nothing of life but its real misery!” Thank you, friend author, whoever you are, and don’t doubt but you are a much better philanthropist than those would-be-philosophers, who are perpetually railing at the splendid creations of human intellect, as if it were *disparaging* to the nature of man, and totally beneath his dignity to be amused for a moment with anything, however plausible or ingenious, that does not stand the test of mathematical demonstration. With what contemptuous pity does one of these “Sir Owls” look down from his fancied elevation on the deluded mortal who honestly believes the world has enough of cloudy weather, without his casting the shade of a frowning brow over its little remaining sunshine. Yet I, for one, believe these arrogant pretenders to superior wisdom and sanctity, as deficient in real benevolence and genuine taste, as are their opposites in prudence and sound judgment; and that all this affected scorn for the flights of imagination, is only in fair guerdon for the neglect with which that fantastic divinity has been pleased to treat their worshipful selves.

What better reason can be assigned for the boorish contempt with which the finely imaginative doctrine of the transmigration of souls is almost universally treated? But is absurdity its only characteristic? Is there nothing sublime in the spectacle of an immortal mind groping through the dark mists of superstition for the day-spring of that light which, though emanating from heaven, was still too faint to show clearly the way to its portals? Is it strange that eyes dim with "hope deferred," should be dazzled even to blindness, by the flash of that other light which is ever too prone to lead astray? Is there no redeeming feature in a system whose exceeding beauty can at times make the wisest and best almost wish to revert to the darkness of paganism, and revel unmolested in those glorious dreams which constitute much of that buoyancy of spirit which invests the past with happiness, the present with hope, the future with promise!

The duration of these splendid visions is commonly limited to the period of early youth; but why should they be so evanescent, unless it is, that the scenes of another and brighter sphere, are fresher and greener in the heart, before the dull clouds of reality have obscured the soft light of memory, which sheds its halo of unearthly brightness over every dim-remembered scene of that hallowed home:—and the weary eye, closing on this every-day world and its commonplace beings and vicissitudes, gathers new brightness from the gorgeous sunlight that illumines every remembered vista in that far-off but unforgotten land, whose inhabitants, not "of earth, earthy," have something higher, and holier, and brighter, and purer, than ever meets the gaze of the bewildered exile in *this* dull creation, where every trace

of its pristine splendor seems fast waning to disappear?\*

Who has never been startled from such a reverie—perchance by the accents of his dearest earthly friend—nor felt that the foot of a mortal had “profaned the haunt of the fairies?” And what right has one individual to dictate to another, and lay an interdict on every train of thought that does not accord precisely with his preconceived opinions or peculiar temperament? He who can find “a local habitation and a name” for his edifices on terra firma, is welcome there to erect them, if so he please; but what business has he to hinder his neighbor from building his “castles in the air,” when he has nowhere else to put them?

“Let saints interdict, and let sages revile  
The sportive creations that fancy supplies;  
Oh, still let her baseless enchantments beguile,  
And veil the bleak prospect of truth from my eyes.

“When realities torture ’tis wise to forget—  
When sorrows assail us, to fly from their sting;  
For fancy can soften the sigh of regret  
And bear us from anguish on fairy-formed wing.

“Then still let the fancied enjoyments you spurn  
Snatch me from the horrible grasp of despair;  
I escape from my sorrows too soon to return,  
And frenzy’s a kinder impostor than care!”

But a word in your ear, my dear sister; as you hope never to realize the full force of that last line, let no living illustration of Locke’s Theory of Ideas ever get

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\*If this is “like Wordsworth,” perhaps the writer ought to feel flattered, if she doesn’t; but any author she has read, is welcome to take pencil and mark his property wherever he can find it; it is more than she can always do.

hold of this; otherwise—the will and power being commensurate—I should have to grace the saloons of an Insane Hospital, or advocate the cause of mental hallucination before the inmates of a Lunatic Asylum in future! However, “one song to thee” before I go; and we’ll call it—

### THAT OTHER HOME.

I PINE for the land of my early dreams,  
 And scenes not *dimly* remembered then :—  
 They were gorgeous things, those skies and streams,  
 Their like is not found 'mid the haunts of men.

There were flowers—no thought of Death on their leaves,  
 Fair forms, and “time th’ avenger” rifled not!  
 Gales that were music, no tempest could mar,  
 For the genius of peace had hallowed the spot.

Fond hearts were there, but had not learned to grieve  
 O'er all the heart most dearly learns to prize;  
 Nor how neglect, the soul's worst frost can freeze :—  
 They basked but in the light of loving eyes.

They called not Hope, the ignis fatuus, there,  
 But a gentle vision whom all might bless;  
 Despite the meteor's shadowy air,  
 They *knew* that mystic light was happiness.

I know not the crime that banished me thence,  
 I know not that home, I may ever regain;  
 But I know, vague dreams have haunted me since,  
 Of a home, I roam o'er this earth for in vain.

VALE.

## LETTER VIII.

## STRICTURES ON SECTARIAN CREEDS.

("Take in broken doses.")

TO S. J. S.

O—, N. Y., June, 1834.

MY DEAR BROTHER:

Yours, per bearer, is received; and—"Lord, Lord, how this world is given to lying!" But don't trouble yourself, or don't flatter yourself (which is it), Master, or Mr., or whatever it's proper to call you; for I consider myself honestly "engaged" to you; and haven't the remotest idea of giving you a "free pass," or turning you over to another *governante* until you are at least five and twenty and fairly established in life. For the rest, you couldn't possibly have stumbled on a worse casuist to decide those vexed polemic questions, than one who, as yet, lacks a long way of having waded out of their troubled waters herself.

But, "do I remember those everlasting Sabbath-days" (I suppose you are not heathenish enough to say Sundays), "and their hopeful twin-brother, that interminable old catechism?" Do I? Well, thank fortune, I have outgrown the verbiage of the latter, at last, and may be I don't remember the concomitants; but it strikes me I could name a few. Imprimis: Long prayers and ample grace to very sanctimonious breakfasts; next, protracted "*sittings*" over Sunday-school lessons, relieved at last—thanks to the real or supposed anti-soporific Dill—by a flying trip to the garden; invariably prefaced with the injunction "*see that you go straight there, and mind you don't go anywhere else,*" and

accompanied by the moral certainty, that a pair of hard, un pitying eyes were watching every step of your progress, lest the temptation to abduct a rose, or bear off a violet surreptitiously, should prove too strong for poor, *unregenerate*, childish human nature to resist. Third, sitting, prim and demure as forty old tabby cats rolled into one, through the whole morning service, wondering if the preacher *ever would* get done, and the majority of the adult congregation disperse, in time for you to swallow a bit of dry cake, or crackers and cheese, before the residue took you in—to Sunday School I mean—and Fourth: Long, dry recitations and longer prayers, spun out, *on purpose* as I used to think, to prevent wicked little juveniles from braving the possibility of detection and the certainty of its penal consequence, by stealing off to some interdicted establishment whose owners were not too “unco gude” to “break the Sabbath,” by drawing an extra bucket of water for poor famishing children. Fifth: evening service and a race home, to bolt dinner and supper all under one, like any boa constrictor, for fear of being too late for the five o’clock discourse. Sixth: Third service and another hurry home to strip off and put away your Sunday finery before you got too sleepy to attend to it; and then—oh horror of horrors?—the “Shorter catechism!” “*Shorter than what*” you wonder, and so do I; though as you say, “one might possibly contrive to live through it so long as there was anything more to learn, and he didn’t care one solitary fig whether it meant anything or nothing;” but this being compelled, for week after week and year after year, to repeat what is so revolting to the stomach of one’s sense, “*after* he is perfect to a demisemiquaver, letter, and comma, *is* more than mor-



tal man can endure" (right—only a *child* has to endure it;) more especially if, whenever he chance to nod, or be suspected of doing so, he should find himself straightened up by a rousing box on one ear, and the balance of power preserved by the simultaneous application of a counteracting tendency on the other; bestowed with a hearty good-will, grace, and dexterity which nothing but long practice can give.

You, who were so early removed to gentler auspices, escaped this phase of the infliction, though my head aches to this very hour with the recollection (or consequence;) but isn't the whole Sunday system most beautifully contrived to illustrate the meaning of a "day of rest;" and charmingly calculated to inspire children and youth with intense affection for the day and its Maker, and the religion in whose joint names all this childish martyrdom is perpetuated? I, for one, can safely testify to having long suspected the latter of being neither more nor less than a prime invention for gratifying the domineering disposition of our elders, by furnishing them with a standing pretext for admonishing, be-lecturing, browbeating and snubbing their juniors on all occasions. And as for that same Westminster catechism, I hadn't a doubt, in those days, that it emanated directly from the "bottomless pit," on purpose to torment us poor children.

\* \* \* \* \*

Did you ever see the like, friend Public?—"strictures" pages and all among the missing! No, NEVER! No, nor anybody else, unless it was the poor soul that had one wife pulling out all the gray hairs, and another waging a war of extermination against the black ones. Here's one publisher, now, wants us—that is, the "*sperrit*" and the "*medyum*"—to be young and fashionable, say *beside*, and such like primities—insists on divorcing us from our first love and marrying us to that degenerate Yankee, Noah Webster, (though we like honest old Sam Johnson a thousand times better,) and the other has heard of such obsolete antiquities as post-scripts and perorations. And then they both are of opinion, that, after all the weakness and wickedness, the pragmatics and absurdities with which the church has been edifying the world for the last eighteen centuries, you have not yet got true Christian meekness and good sense enough extant, to tolerate a little "sarcastic levity of tongue" in just such an off-hand, fearless and free showing up of their effects, as chanced to emanate, some nineteen or twenty years since, from the "gray goose-quill" of a writer still young enough to wield it without glasses.

Is your majesty of the nineteenth century such a graceless, good-for-naught, such a snarling *dog*-matical, that you can't possibly endure a little spicy—though more playful than spiteful—effervescence of youthful waywardness and mature asceticism? No, we don't believe a word of it—that must be *scandalum magnatum!* A pretty figure you'd cut now,

wouldn't you, trying to get up a scene, and not a single anathema on hand to hurl against book, they having all been appropriated to author long ago, and when even survivors and *fac similes* of those who, in default of the virtue which "believeth all things," tried so hard to superinduce that phase which "endureth all things," must have seen that, after all, her *light-artillery* was never intentionally aimed at anything more sacred than their own *ex cathedra* fulminations, and the "wood, hay and stubble," which, alas! too often repel when it would be much wiser to attract—those, at least, whose mental optics cannot see why it should be so very wrong for poor sinners to *laugh* at the saints' "sanctified" airs and faces, and so very right for them to *rail* at their quizzical ones—so much worse for the ungodly to sneer upon their own responsibility, than for the righteous to "curse in the name of the Almighty;" nor why Christians of every name—with their mouths all full of humble confessions, and "brotherly love,"—shouldn't be *as civil* to the world and each other as was the old Roman heathen to his prisoner, whom he told that *much learning* had made him mad, instead of taunting him with ignorance, imbecility or sinister design, because his views and feelings, principles and practice happened to run counter to his own.

However, anything rather than "cause a brother to offend," or evince himself no better Christian now than we were then; so, if it really be such a flagrant breach of

Christian charity for us to show up, after our own fashion, just how much and how little we ever did deserve to have the gentle epithets, "Atheist," "Infidel," "Reprobate" and "unpardonable sin" forever dinned (and boxed) into our luckless ears; and how little even the most honest partisan of any creed is "doing God service" by setting the example of *calling names*, because he cannot always drill, worry, or drive children and youth, sheep, lambs, and goats into the fold of the great and loving Shepherd of all, just whenever he likes; why you must e'en accept from your "ancient gossip," the author, this same *amende* for the abstraction of suppressed matter *after* the residue was stereotyped.

\* \* \* \* \*

\* \* \* \* \*

But don't let grandmother get hold of this, whatever you do; for though egregiously misplaced, she would, of course, and as in duty bound, feel vastly shocked and deeply grieved, at my audacious and most deplorable impiety. "Shades of all the Pilgrims"—where *did* "this degenerate plant of a strong vine come from?" From Plymouth Rock, at your service, madam—according to the inscription—though I don't believe a word of it, and haven't a doubt it "*lies*" like any other "epitaph!" I think I see the committee

now, sitting in solemn conclave over "some of our best names," canvassing their respective claims to "the high honor"—and no thanks to them for the selection, so far as I am concerned! Who cares to have his ancestors proved a greater set of dunderheads than must needs have been inferred from existing specimens? Not I! It is bad enough, in all conscience, to have had St. Paul down upon them in advance, as a set of graceless vagabonds—worse than so many infidels—for as near as I can learn, our father was the first (after his bachelor uncle), to open his eyes to the possibility that the "house of Peveril," might eventually become "*hum-bled*" if not "*humble*," unless its sons condescended to cultivate something beside barren acres, and new scions of the old family stock.

The reason *why* I don't believe the inscription is this—History and legend both aver, that there arrived, some years later, a self-sufficient, presumptuous, independent clique, who had the impertinence to object to the location, find fault with the government, and commit sundry other enormities by way of making themselves popular; and just so much the more as they were coaxed to remain in the colony, just so much the more they wouldn't; all of which tallies so exactly with old family traditions, and the very "nature of the beast," that I haven't a doubt they were there—every mother's son of them—a hard-headed, self-willed, contumacious set, as they were, and are, and always will be to the end of time, I fear! For example here are you, this blessed minute, reading straight along in spite of my prescription, just as if you didn't know how few eyes could bear as much as mine. "Well, if you *will* go to perdition, it can't be helped—I've done

*my duty!*" But see that you pay more attention to the other injunction, and burn this, or hide it away and lose it *anywhere* but in your coat-pocket, where grandmother will be sure to overhaul it on your next visit. I wouldn't *really* worry or distress *her* upon any account, though I *have* known people whom it would be truly refreshing to see get hold of it; always provided you were safe out of reach of their saintship's claws, and at a respectful distance from their mellifluous tones of voice. By the way, did you ever remark what uncommonly fine, strong lungs the saints always have? I wonder if any of them ever die of consumption! Pray inquire of the College of Physicians—the suggestion might be useful in physiology!

But wouldn't some of the "elect," look about as saintly on its perusal, as they and others were wont to do, once upon a time, when I used to tell some of the hopeful tyros—whose new-fledged sanctity hadn't quite overawed, or effaced my impression of what incomparable ninnies we school-girls thought them a few weeks before—that "I really couldn't say whether I should like to be a Christian or not, never having seen one that I could remember:"—and others of the embryo "ambassadors," that "it was very evident the Lord cared little *how* we felt, or what we thought concerning him, or he would take care to be more ably represented."

But this was wrong—all wrong—no matter how much a man may deserve censure or ridicule for foisting himself into a position he is unable to fill, it is ungenerous for even a woman to strike at one who has no intellectual armor to parry the thrust! It would be dastardly in a man, and I hope that *you* will always

have too much self-respect to aim a blow of the kind at one who is thus doubly disarmed. For even I—child that I was, and reckless, callous, and “*impenitent*” as I was deemed—felt many a pang at seeing the poor, simple, unsuspecting go-betweens, grazed by the passing shaft that rankled far deeper in a loftier mark. But the peerless bores were so intolerably annoying with their “gratuitous efforts”—made by special request—“for the conversion of one who lacked *nothing* but the grace of God” (and the other exception to “everything”);\* and the temptation to pay back, to those I could not otherwise reach, some small portion of the long arrears of contumely, opprobrium, and childish grievance, *was too strong to be resisted*; so the poor spoonies had to suffer. But I hope the obtuseness of their own perceptions, did them good service on the occasion, and that you, who had far less of the “gall of bitterness” infused into your young existence, will never copy this portion of my example.

Your affectionate sister,

LOUISE.

### ORPHANAGE.

Lightly

Men speak of widowhood and orphanage,  
 As words, that well might be defined by others!  
 And talk of sorrow, loneliness, and grief,  
 As graphic terms; and competent to tell  
 The measure of unmeasured desolation.

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\* Alluding to the expression of an old lady who used to say that if her daughter married to please her, “she would give her *everything* but the grace of God and a gold house.”

You, who did ever *love* what you have lost,  
Say are they not mere mockeries of thought?

For thee

“Sad widowhood,” I know thee not; but oh,  
Thy dread compeer, only an *angel* fallen,  
Its fearful import may define! Fallen  
From heaven, from happiness, from hope—  
Exiled forever, orphaned from God  
To all eternity! Yes, *he might* tell;  
Though earth has not a language to express  
A thing so redolent of wretchedness!

“‘Orphan’—a wanderer and a fugitive,  
An alien from his home, a stranger on  
All hearths—the common football of a world!”  
Aye that is Truth; but not the half is told.

“What is it then to be an orphan?”  
Oh, is it not to live, and move, and breathe,  
In utter solitude mid countless thousands?  
To brook cold looks and careless greetings, e’en  
When most we yearn for kindlier tones?  
To stand unrecognized amid the friends  
Of youth and childhood’s haunts, then turn  
The weary foot again to wandering,  
Reckless of aim!

It is, to live within  
The marts of pleasure and of gain, yet be  
No willing worshiper at either shrine;  
To *think* and speak, and act, not for your pleasure  
But another’s—the veriest slave of time,  
And circumstance—Fortune’s automaton!  
To hear of fraud, injustice, and oppression,  
And know *who* is the readiest victim:



To make an inventory of Fortune's  
Left-hand favors, and reckon them your own.  
Cold friend, and causeless foe—proud thoughts  
that rise

To fall; bright hopes, that bud for blighting:  
Affections, which are passions, lava-like  
Destroying what they rest upon. Feeling's  
Fond, fervid tide preparing icebergs for  
That fragile bark, the loving human heart;  
O'er-mastering pride, life and its changes  
Cannot bow; and soul-subduing poverty,  
That lays its iron, cold grasp upon the high  
Free spirit: strength, sorrow-born, that bends  
Nor breaks not in its clasp—all, *all are*  
The orphan's heritage. And if aught else  
Can wring, with more enduring pang, the soul  
So sternly nerved *to bear* that too, is his:  
Full surely may he count on his reversion!

And his to feel the spirit's yearning love  
For all of melody and beauty, and see  
A mist come o'er the scene, a dimness on  
The mental vision! 'Tis, to dream of joy  
And wake to wretchedness; to stand but for  
One little moment where the fresh'ning breeze  
Steals o'er the languid lip and brow, telling  
Of forest leaf, and ocean wave, and happy  
Homes, and cheerful toil; and bringing gently  
To the wearied heart, its long-forgotten  
Dreams of gladness back; then turn the fevered cheek  
Away from its reviving influence,  
And deem it is, in truth, a passing fair  
And goodly world; but in it there is not

A resting for the orphan! The very breath  
 Of heaven, that comes to all, comes not to him,  
 Bound in "iron gyves" of unremitting toil,  
*His* vital air is wretchedness—what needs  
 He any other?

And music's tone,  
 And beauty's glance, the green earth's smile, and  
 heaven's  
 Resplendent veil, where angel eyes are peering  
 Through, what are they all to him, but sunny  
 Leaves, in some bright book he may not stay  
 To scan?

It is, to have a frater-feeling  
 For the flower untimely withered—  
 To claim connection with the blighted bough;  
 And feel a parting pang, as the frail leaf,  
 Wind-driven, flits restless along! 'Tis, to watch  
 The glorious light of intellect,  
 Burn dimly, and expire; and mark the soul  
 Though born in heaven, *pause* in its high career,  
 Wave in its course, and *fall* to grovel in  
 The dust of earth's contamination, till  
 Even Death shall scorn, to give a thing  
 So low, aught like a welcome greeting!

Oh, who would be, that pale  
 Blue mist, that hangs so low in air, like hope  
 That has abandoned earth, yet reacheth not  
 To heaven; that unappropriated star  
 In nature's galaxy—that withering,  
 Lone exotic in creation's garden  
 Which men do call "an orphan?"

L.

## LETTER IX.

## OBJECTIONS TO TEXAN ADVENTURE IN 1834.

TO S. J. S.

O—— N. Y., Sep., 1834.

MY VERY DEAR BROTHER:

MOST cordially do I congratulate you upon the recovered use of your right hand—I wish I could add—and the *uninterrupted exercise* of all your faculties, mental as well as physical. But it seems to me that this idea of going to Texas savors more of madness, than good sense or sound judgment. What are those “eligible offers” which you allude to so gingerly, just as if you knew they wouldn’t bear specification—anything more about sailing under a black flag?

But a truce to nonsense, and Stanley, *do not* go to Texas—not now, at least, if ever! Look at its history; a few restless spirits, for the most part, no doubt, the very scum and scourge of civilization, have fled to it as a land of refuge or theatre for wild and lawless adventure, and are now seeking to embroil the home of their adoption, in the horrors of civil war. They will doubtless succeed—that they have not done so already is no fault, or merit, of theirs—and then, when overborne in the conflict (as they should be) never dream they will lack the audacity to apply for succor to the country they have abandoned. Not they! And what they ask that they will receive; though no more *entitled* to it than a “loup the dyke daughter,” to the protection of a father whose name she has dishonored, whose affection she has spurned, whose hearth she has deserted!

I am no statesman to foresee results and predict their consequence; but know enough of geography to recollect that Texas is nearer to Louisiana than Maine—though somehow you “everlasting Yankees” always do contrive to get nearer to everything than anybody else—and of human nature to expect the South to avail herself of the proximity, to strengthen her own arm for that fierce war of opinion, which the frantic fanaticism of the North seems bent on precipitating. Whoever lives to witness the successful interference of the United States with the family broils of Mexico and Texas, will see the latter become a “bone of contention” between the white bear of the North and the lion of the South; and long may they continue to growl over it, so it keep them from gnawing on each other’s vitals!

You need not marvel if I chance to be somewhat in the rear of events; we, in this little Yankee colony, are mostly blest with sectarian politics; and if it were not for an occasional excursion into the surrounding State of New York, I could scarce pick up as much of the other commodity as would suffice to annoy some intolerable old proser, or as is like to become matter of history. Still I go in clearly for the let-alone system, and say once again *do not go*, though I know that to you men, wherever danger is there is a charm! Heaven knows I am no coward, yet I sleep little since this intimation of your design. The government is so unsettled and arbitrary, personal security cannot be great. I fear for you, the savage brutality of the native, the murderous dirk of the Spaniard, the deeper duplicity and deadlier hate of the Catholic and wanton; and worse than all, the implacable hostility or more fearful friendship of the outlaw and renegade. Living, for the most of

your short life, in the quiet villages of New England, you have, in all probability, had no opportunity for acquiring tact to guard against the finesse of one adversary and the vindictive fury of another, of course; you have it not; experience might bring it; but it would come too late! It is in vain that I strive to view this subject in any other light; I cannot shake off the conviction that in going to Texas, you seek an early, and violent, perhaps ignominious grave!

If your propositions are really eligible, why not pass them over to Dunmore—he is older, more acquainted with the various modifications of human nature, and consequently better qualified to cope with its multiform developments. Moreover, as a husband and father, he has, as Lord Bacon says, “given bond to fate” not to engage, for good or for evil, in any rash or headlong enterprise. There are other, I hope, *better* prospects open to you. Evelyn tells me she has written you recently “on a subject *not new*,” and requests me to do the same.

My brother what shall I say? My thoughts, my expectations, my very heartstrings are entwined indissolubly around this object. It is the one verdant spot where the seeds of earthly enjoyment might yet arise and blossom for me; if a blight fall upon this, alas for my hope of happiness—its tale is told, its requiem is spoken! Once more then, my generous noble-minded brother, let me entreat you, *be persuaded*; let not both your sisters plead in vain for the inestimable privilege, of contributing by word and deed toward making you what you ought to become, an ornament to your name, an honor to your country! And *why* do you hesitate? simply because you “fear that *I* am sacrificing some

cherished vision of domestic happiness, to promote your interests!" And *this* from you—you who know how often the assertion, that I "was born to be *tolerated*, never to be loved," was reiterated in my youthful ears, till a conviction of its truth became deep and abiding; and the young affections so early and hopelessly repressed, were garnered up for *you* as the only being on earth, who could ever be expected to appreciate or return them. If the idea were not superlatively absurd, it would be truly vexatious.

In the name of all that is ridiculous, do oblige me by delineating the form of the pining, sentimental, love-sick old maid, which your imagination has conjured up, as gliding among your household gods some ten or fifteen years hence, like an impersonation of all the "Azure Demons" from the Field of the Incurables. If you please though, strike out something new, I object to being mounted like a witch on a broomstick—that is entirely too common-place! More especially for a *savant*, who "*apprehends* (from certain facts which have come incidentally to his knowledge), that longer experience, and more extended intercourse with congenial circles, have taught me ere this, that there may be something dearer to the heart of woman than a *brother's* love!" "*Mirabile dictu!*" And pray "how long have you professed apprehension," my very venerable signior of seventeen? And didn't it cost you a vast deal of trouble, to get up that very pretty and vastly wise-looking sentence? And what will you improvise next, if I admit your premises, and deny the inference? Among other items of precocious wisdom, perhaps you may know the "*heart of woman*," is said to be most susceptible between the ages of sixteen and-two-and-

twenty ; and if, by reason of extreme old age, you have not forgotten how to count, you will find I have not only entered the vortex, but passed its utmost verge *unscathed*, as *I* think, though it is probable *you* are the better judge, so a word in your ear before you decide. *I* never knew anybody “pine away and die” for love, unless there was opposition in the case, from whence I conclude, it is more love of one’s own “sweet will” than anything else. If you know any desperate case of the kind, advise the patient to recover as fast as possible ; “dying for love” is a pitiful excuse to offer one’s Maker, for appearing in his presence uncalled. At all events, the heart that is preoccupied, must bear a charmed security, and therefore,

“The love of” *saddened* “childhood’s years,  
The love of youth’s first vow—  
The same through sickness, grief and wrong,  
May not be banished now !”

One is wise, “but I care not,” another is rich, “yet I am well,” a third is noble alike in person, in mind, and in fortune, and I would ask no better *materiel* “to make me gods—and find them clay”—yet still

There comes no change upon my heart,  
Though many a one may cross my brow,  
The hopes I nursed ere life grew dark,  
Those very hopes I cherish now !

Fashion and ease in vain may smile,  
Or wealth his glittering hoard bestow,  
Or love strew flowers with sweeter wile,  
Their charms are bright but all too low.

What though I frequent folly’s fair,  
Where hands and hearts are often sold ;  
What if my smile be lightest there?  
When nearly viewed, ’tis something cold!

Ambition, I have sought thy shrine,  
 And at thy altar kneel I yet,  
 For lofty thought and high design  
 In recreant heart were never met.

My woman's spirit owns thy sway,  
 Nor writhes beneath the chain,  
 Nor falters on the toilsome way,  
 With truant thought, and pining vain!

The fealty vowed in early youth,  
 And kept through all my weary lot  
 Is pledged again in woman's truth;  
 I am no changeling, doubt me not!

But if you like our worthy grandmother, believe a vow "to love honor and obey," *indispensable* to woman's happiness, recollect *mine* is in your keeping! The sooner you take measures to resume your native rank the better; for until that is done, I promise you most solemnly, I will *never* marry—no never! I will *not* be the connecting link between a blacksmith and a gentleman—I will ally no man to poverty and disgrace! Aye—*disgrace*—for that it is, for any *man* to fall below the station in which he was born. I respect honest industry as much as any one, but God placed *you* in a different sphere, and gifted you with a high order of intellect, alike capable of maintaining, or regaining your position. What if you have been rudely thrust from your place? It is yours again whenever you choose to take it. A slip from the old oak, will you bend like the osier to the first adverse blast? Are you still a child that must tamely succumb to all the powers that be—a weak woman, for whom there is *no resource*, but meekly to bow to every passing caprice of unbridled despotism? Recollect you are a *man*! The



high gift of the head to devise, and the hand to execute, is yours !

“ And wilt *thou* be fainthearted, and turn from the strife,  
From the mighty arena, where all that is grand,  
And devoted, and pure, and adoring in life,  
Is for high-thoughted souls, like thine, to command?  
Oh no, never dream it !”

Inclosed you will find an Ode to Ease, by the Hon. R. H. Wilde, of Ga., in which, despite the concluding lines, he seems to doubt whether the choice of a literary inactive seclusion were a wise one. You cannot if you would, take such a choice; then why not make a nobler? Most anxiously shall I await your *final* decision. In the meantime Evelyn, who seems half inclined to make me the organ of her general communications, desires to be remembered to you, speaks enthusiastically (for her) of the improvement which the last two years have wrought in your intellectual character and prospects, and requests, that you will “continue to improve in chirography and extend your acquaintance with Mathematics.” I would add the name of an humbler science, but think you are already aware to what I refer.

Ever Yours,

LOUISE.

## LETTER X.

## NEW ENGLAND ABSTRACTIONS.

T O S. J. S.

A.—N. Y., Nov., 1834.

TEN THOUSAND THANKS, my dear, *dear* BROTHER, for your last epistle, and its thrice welcome contents. The Rubicon, it seems, is passed, and I can well sympathize with your buoyancy of feeling—it is the natural result of sudden release from deep and long-protracted suspense, and you need not feel surprised should a reaction soon ensue; time, the great regulator, will eventually restore the natural equilibrium of your spirits, and I am too happy not to acquiesce most cheerfully in your determination “to leave the dust of the coal where you found it,” and against the school have no disparaging word to say. The severe scientific course of the N. E. Seminaries is perfectly proper for gentlemen, though I, for one, am heretical enough to question its utility when applied to ladies; being too stupid, I suppose, to perceive how one and the same system, or routine of instruction can fit persons for diametrically opposite stations in life. When *men* become incompetent to manage the affairs of the out-door world, and women to regulate its internal police, it will be time enough for the latter to preside in the arena of science, and demonstrate their proficiency in the lady-like accomplishments of surveying, architecture, and navigation. The only use that I can see of these vast acquirements, at present, is to bore plain, sensible people (like myself) to death with

their pragmatistical nonsense about the "equality of masculine and feminine intellect."

Whenever I hear a mother espousing the affirmative of this proposition, I *think*, she is pleading guilty to a most inexcusable neglect of her offspring; for did she take the trouble to *remark* what comes under her observation, she would very soon see the difference between investigation and discrimination. She might speechify to the end of time, I should not be convinced! "What has he *done*," was Napoleon's test of greatness; and what is a cause good for, I ask, which from creation's dawn till now, has never produced a single effect? Why just precisely nothing at all!

The truth is, about one half the women in our world may fairly take precedence of the same number of men, and for the residue, the less said about their intellects, the better; while, on the other hand, we find a few at least among the men, so immeasurably superior, they distance all comparison—"none but themselves can be their parallel." And none *but* some wise fool would ever have thought of instituting one in the face of "Moses and the Prophets" and "twelve Apostles too;" yet succeeding simpletons continue to send their small wits woolgathering on the subject, for the *pleasure*, I suppose, of being shunned as disagreeable, laughed at as ridiculous, and compared to the ambitious frog in the fable. And their gallant champions of the other sex fare little or no better at our hands—to be suspected of elucidating the question more by *illustration* than argument, is generally the meed of their chivalry.

This onslaught on *New England* "Abstractions" may be rather ill-timed, but is not altogether so unprovoked as you might suppose; for ever since the fame of

my astonishing genius reached some of their higher Seminaries, I have been bored to death by circulars, prospectuses, and appeals: that is to say I should have been, if I hadn't had the uncommon presence of mind to think of enlightening my visual organs by the blaze of their wit, instead of wasting it on the dark places of my understanding. I do assure you the coruscations are often most brilliant; but why don't the originators *pay their own postage*, and then strike out boldly for the *ne plus ultra* of absurdity, style their embryo Academies, *Colleges*, and confer all manner of degrees? Some Mosiana must have been striking Plymouth Rock of late, otherwise I can't conceive how these Puritan *savan-ese* should have imbibed such copious draughts of learning, piety, and universal benevolence, that they can look with pity and disdain upon the sordid, puerile interests of personal and domestic life; and devote themselves (and others too) so heroically and unreservedly to the elevation and enlightenment of mankind in general, and the western hemisphere in particular. "Woe is me," that I haven't even the expansive intellect to grasp the colossal idea of such a magnificent scale of operations, much less the transcendent wisdom and boundless benevolence to co-operate in a mission of such high emprise! But I can stand far off and admire, and suppose eloquence must have its crown; so here goes: D. D., Distinguished Dunce, A. M., All Moonshine, C. S., Consummate Simpleton, E. G., Egregious Goose, either, or all of which are entirely at their service and singularly appropriate and becoming to all persons ambitious of writing their names in the middle of the alphabet.

The ovation may, to be sure, fall somewhat short of

their own "*juste pretensions*"—claims, I should have said, for everybody knows how very *unpretending* they are, and that there never is, never was, and never will be, one of the race the least bit conceited; but having no single imperfection of their own to bless themselves withal, they can of course afford to overlook any little shortcomings of mine with all the condescending affability imaginable. And they "*hadn't ought*"\* to expect much, they "*know they hadn't*," from a barbarian of the extreme west, living, at this very present, away out in the middle of New York; and who's already "*done been caught*,"† once in her life among the Hot-tentots of "Old Virginy;" where they don't even know that the essential oil of all sanctity, grace, and decorum is to be found only in the soul of a ramrod, nor how "*common*" it is, not to keep a house shut up all the while, looking as stiff and stately, and dim and dismal, as old Giant Grim in the Cave of Despair; or what a scandalous *faux pas* it would be for a lady to step forward and look out, like an honest woman, if she felt like it, instead of standing away back out of sight and peeping through the blinds like an Eastern slave, or regular *intriguante* through the bars of a Spanish jealousy, or Turkish harem. "Oh *Ciel!* That anything *but* an actress or a milliner should *ever* stale her sacred purityship by being *seen* near an open door or window, *misericorde!*" Ho! some salts here quick before they faint, and as for me, I may as well tramp off at once and camp out with other pagans down toward the equator; for it will never do to show my face in these

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\* New England, and †Southern provincialisms, not restricted by any means to the "profane vulgar."

latitudes again, after having lost caste past all redemption by mere mention of such vulgarizing, undignified exposure!

Well it can't be helped, but it's *their* mission to civilize, christianize, *catechize*, and patronize all the rest of creation, and *how* those "morning stars" ever got through that song without their prompting, or how the world ever did get along without them, I'm sure I don't pretend to say; though I rather suspect that when "the foundations were laid" they must have been there! Otherwise it wouldn't have been their obvious duty and manifest destiny, to charge themselves with all public and private weal, "from the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same." Nor would it have been so incumbent on them, to remind us, in all our "out-goings and incomings, our down-sittings and uprisings," that *they* "are the people," and very "high up in the pictures," while we have only just entered the first Horn-book of civilization! It's even so, wisdom will undoubtedly die with them, we understand all that part of the lesson perfectly; but not how people whose very life-breath is devotion, whose every pulsation is only "*a duty*" performed, *could* reconcile it to their consciences to neglect us after this fashion! Here we are, grown up like so many weeds in a garden, instead of being trained up in the way we should go, and now things have come to a pretty pass; and how all those Professorships are to be filled is more than I can tell. For we of the ourang-outang species are not aspiring—that is to say *not so very*—and doubt whether a single Lusus could be found in the whole tribe sufficiently *tete eleve* to enshroud himself in super-celestial abstractions, live upon moonshine steeped in mirage, and leave all grosser

materialities, like dollars and cents, for the erection of new shrines, whence "incense and a pure" (golden) "offering" should never cease to arise to the honor and glory of the *primum mobiles*. Indeed, we sorely fear they will have to come down from the acme of their cloud-capped empyrean, and burn their own fingers for the sake of the chestnuts, or find the whole fruits of their projected suzerainty turn into "apples of Sodom" and "grapes of Gomorrah" in their very hands:

"Oh, wad some pow'r the giftie gie us,  
To see oursel's as ithers see us,  
It wad frae monie a blunder free us,  
And foolish notion;  
What airs in dress an' gait wad lea'e us,  
And e'en devotion!"

But "*mabby*"\* now, you, being only a collateral of the masculine gender, haven't been initiated into the merits of this grand missionary, self-propagating, normal-school system. Ah, it grieves me excessively to think how ineligible you are to that "seraph's wreath and martyr's crown!" But don't lay it too much to heart, you may arrive, some day, at the enviable felicity of being taxed indirectly for the good cause, through the medium of your better-half; for, as near as I could translate out of blue flame into "king's English," it was to be established, in the first place, by a regular re-script upon all ladies connected, by even the tenth degree of propinquity, with Alma Mater, (and not living convenient to any other sewer or gully into which they could as well throw five or ten dollars *per annum*) and

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\* (*May be*) — another Down-Eastism, though heard less frequently than "*hadn't ought,*" in *New England*, and "*Done been,*" "*done seen,*" "*done done,*" etc., in *Southern uppertendom*.

sustained ever after, by that, and the voluntary labor of devotees, eleemosynary pupils, and outside barbarians, ambitious of the high honor of serving under such illustrious auspices, and living upon "a quart of water" *per diem* "boiled down to a pint to make it strong." Should this resource fail, I suppose, we may look for a regular "interdict," or edict extraordinary, enjoining it upon all persons having the fear of excommunication, social and sacerdotal, before their eyes, to come right round by the base of Pilgrim Rock and take out a license or passport, under penalty of being "black-balled" by all "good society" in this world, and knocked over the head with St. Calvin's keys if ever they presume to seek admission among the *elite* of the next. And what puts the matter past all kind of doubt is, that they have already got the whole standing army of William the Testy drawn up in battle array; so there will be no compelling them to forego *ad valorem* duties.

Should this seem more "savage" than "barbarous," recollect New England has sons and daughters of her own, abundantly able and willing to chant her praises, and their own too, as all these self-styled illuminati, and old women of all genders can abundantly testify. Moreover, she claims the Sedgwick, Sigourney, Bunker Hill, and Daniel Webster; and that is honor enough; so she can very well afford to dispense with my commendation. And if she couldn't, *I* owe her nothing; it was no fault of mine that some of our forefathers settled on her soil. Had they located elsewhere, they might have done as the Livingstons and Van Rensselaers did, instead of squatting themselves down in the selfish enjoyment of ancestral dignity and pecuniary



independence, and making no provision for the increasing claims on a diminishing patrimony.

Eureka! I have found it, I do believe; the very root of bitterness whence springs the indomitable Yankee aversion to *negro* slavery. "The head and front of its offending hath this extent—no more," it continues to this very day to sustain the children of the Southern planters in the rank of their fathers, whereas the descendants of the New England gentry are "everything by turns and nothing long." When they get to the bottom of the wheel they must, of course, look up, and no thanks to them; they can look nowhere else! What was an acre, two hundred years ago, is no more than an acre now—perhaps not so much; some lawless freebooter of a river may have helped himself to a mouthful of terra firma and "no remede."

This reminds me of your "how do you expect to dispose of yourself *ad interim*?" Ans. I left New Yankeeedom immediately upon receipt of yours, and entered school for the ensuing year, in order to study French and *review* some other things which I never looked at before; an arrant piece of humbuggery, isn't it; but it hurts no one, not even myself, for it is no trouble to keep up with these reviewers; the next one will probably find me somewhere south of Mason and Dixon's line. Evelyn has gone to Tennessee, and perhaps I may follow suit. If people here, who know I left school at fourteen, will persist in the infatuation of considering me well-educated, I may, in process of time, pass for quite a knowing wight, among strangers, and, if none of those learned seminarians happen to cross my path, hope to profit by the delusion. "My health" (truth to tell, it is none of the best) will, as usual, furnish the

ostensible motive for going South; a more cogent one is, that all the more eligible situations here, seem to belong, almost as matter of course, to those who are educated up, not those who are brought down to them; and beside, I rather suspect my natural affinities tend in that direction; at any rate, I don't choose to be "only a teacher" among my old acquaintance—I could better brook the estimate from a stranger. And when I recollect how much *more freely* this disrespect for the sole profession open to females—one too, which should pertain to ladies and gentlemen only—is *avowed* at the south, I lose all compunction; consider myself greatly superior to what they are at all entitled to expect, and them, as incorrigibly stupid and ungrateful, if they fail to perceive and appreciate their own uncommon good fortune, and my remarkable condescension. But, no doubt, many a vulgar old vixen has so identified *herself* with the idea of a teacher, that people there see no propriety in applying the title, and that of lady, to the same individual. However, I made out to pass in Virginia, and feel no uneasiness on that score. If my acquaintance is not sought, it will never occur to me, for the first time, that *I* am the principal loser; so you see what a comfortable thing it is to have a good opinion of one's-self.

Evelyn appears to have conceived strong predilections in favor of Mississippi. "*There,*" she says, "talent is appreciated and speedily rewarded, without waiting to ascertain if the possessor have no sins of self-esteem to be punished for, by the guileless race of upstarts." She thinks you would do well to settle somewhere in that section at an early date, as you "would best be qualified to practice your profession where it was ac-

quired." All in good time, my fair sister; but your collegiate course comes first, and that should be taken here in New York (which, I take to be, a sort of transition from granite to alluvion), that you may rub off somewhat of the rust of the Yankee as well as "dust of the coal," before entering a community so widely dissimilar in all its habits of life and modes of thought; and I am truly glad you "have had," and will have, "no leisure to burn your fingers with that most inflammable of all subjects, slavery!" Never lay "the flattering unction to your soul," that *where you are*, you ever can hear, unless by accident, anything but *ex parte* or grossly-caricatured facts, or rather statements wantonly distorted, if not wholly fabricated (as, no doubt, they often are) on purpose to exasperate the slaveholder to deeds of violence that may warrant a terrible retribution. Every step now taken in the premises, must inevitably be a retrograde movement; the hand that raised, must allay the storm, or none but Omnipotence can walk its troubled waters with security. The South *will not* brook this officious intermeddling with her domestic policy; and few, if any, candid persons, reside there long without being convinced that she ought not. Suspend your opinion therefore, until you can base it, in reason and equity, *on the general operation of the system*. Recollect, to exasperate is not to convince, much less convert; *mind your own business*, and rest assured, that if others need, they will be very apt to call for your assistance. It's exceedingly generous of us, to shoulder their responsibilities, no doubt; but the old maxim is, "*Be just before you are generous*," and I question if we might not all be quite as profitably (if not altogether so pleasantly), engaged in mending our

own ways, as in repenting of other people's transgressions. But, I suppose, *the price of lumber* must be down again, as the old cynic said, *that* was the reason why nobody thought it worth while to "pull the beam out of his own eye," in *his* day.

I wish you could have been in Chapel, this evening, and heard Sterne's fine description of Solitary Imprisonment, which he mistook for slavery, inserted in an abolition composition, declamation, or—I can't exactly say what the thing was intended for; but really the author would have swallowed Mrs. A——'s vocabulary at a mouthful; lexicons are nothing to him; the whole dictionary is used up—Dr. Johnson is undone! The unconscionable cormorant! But honest "Old Bluff" isn't to be engaged while *I* am extant, and no mark set on the homicide; so wake up and look at the little cannibal's portrait. He is about *thirty* (?), goes by the name of the Seven P's: to wit—Painter, Poet, Pedant, Printer, Parson, Philanthropist, Pedagogue; is addicted to philosophy, dabbles in phrenology, and the *materia medica*, and last, not least, "the sweet youth is in love." Yet, somehow, he doesn't seem to prosper here—it can't be for want of being sufficiently explicit, though; for he has a new "flame" every week, and, among other enormities, has recently perpetrated an acrostic on our French teacher. The class advise her to have it set to music and sung in full conclave, one line to the tune of Old Hundred, the next to Yankee Doodle; but as he has the grace or lacks the audacity to use my name to do the ridiculous, I am inclined to be "merciful, and spare."

You are fortunate in having no Female department in your institution: if you are half as sensitive about "submitting your thoughts to public inspection" as you

pretend; but never feel discouraged if you are "ignorant of all rules of composition." You surely have good ideas, and these will naturally suggest appropriate expressions; and you can tell when they are properly arranged by reading them over once or twice audibly. If you find the process fatiguing, try again—your piece wants remodeling—a good style will be easy to read. When you have "nothing to say," say nothing; and if you are "incompetent to say anything interesting," leave your hearers to make the discovery; it is a great piece of supererogation, not to say gratuitous impertinence, to tell them so, and then inflict an effusion long as a congressman's speech, or one of my letters. It is high time this transparent amalgam of vanity and hypocrisy should be exploded from the literary world, a boarding-school Miss might perhaps be excused for retaining it; but what business have *men* with such pitiful affectation?

Speaking of style, I wish somebody had mine; I am perfectly aware it is not exactly the thing for a lady; but as I think, rapidly, vehemently, independently, so must I write. You know that for me there are, Dark lines on childhood's sunny leaf, which I retrace only in concert with you. The lesson they unconsciously taught, was one of daring, if not unhesitating independence, of thought and of action; and the time is not yet come to lay aside this forced and unnatural character. Perhaps it never may while I have being; but in one of my air-castles there is a quiet nook, where the artificial amazon may settle down into the gentle, unassuming, dependent creature that God made woman; without a fear that her affection is obtrusive, or her presence unwelcome, and be happier, far happier there in that

cherished helplessness than if wielding the destinies of all her race.

Good night, my dear brother, may the night of misfortune never overtake you.

Your own,

LOUISE.

### MY COMMON-PLACE-BOOK.

*Friday Evening, New York, Dec., 1834,*

LESSONS, exercises and reviews *en masse* to be attended to, besides sundry important though minor matters to be looked after; and last, not least, a composition to be fabricated for the ensuing week.

Now if this were simply an affair of imagination, there wouldn't be anything so very repulsive about the thing; reducing it to a tangible form is what I dislike. Only think, now, of robbing an innocent old goose of her plumage, and then sitting down *deliberately* to convict yourself of the larceny, in lines which betray indubitable marks of their extraction. Isn't it absurd? To be sure it is, and not over legal either, for no one is obliged to criminate himself; and my opinion is, that every one who expects another to write by the square and compass, the clock and the almanac, ought to furnish him a gold pen instanter. However, it's no use talking, for "the powers that be" always did have a fashion of snubbing the powers that would be, so I may as well succumb and "follow the multitude to do evil."

Having come to this magnanimous conclusion, I set about arranging preliminaries with all possible dispatch. Unfortunately this operation consumed more time than might have been necessary, if my appendages, with a

perversity as I think peculiar to themselves, were not uniformly where I am not; consequently the negative courage which had incited to action, began to ooze out at the end of my finger nails before the process was half complete, and by the time it was finished had evaporated entirely. Such a catastrophe may not be altogether unique in school history, but the dilemma was none the less vexatious for that, and a way to get out of it was a desideratum. So I plunged into a grand cogitation, and was just about to seize the very original idea of trying how far Friday's unlucky stars might be made responsible for the failure, when a voice at my side exclaimed, "Why don't you write?" "Write, write," said I dreamily, "writing is a purely mechanical operation, and not at all to my taste." "What of that, I thought you were going to prepare a composition this evening?" "Well, so I was;" but—"So you *was*, then why are you not now," rejoined the *createur des questions impertinente*, insolently re-echoing my words.

It's exceedingly disagreeable to be wheeled to the right about, and made to look a subject point blank in the face when trying to escape it with all your might; yet being rather amiable (when there's nothing to vex me,) I kept very cool and civil, instead of flying right off in a passion as an ill-tempered person might, and merely attempted a diversion by mootng the vexed question of "subject;" but madam, the inquisitor, wasn't to be cajoled by such a ruse. "Why, there are the languages and customs, the arts and sciences, the virtues and graces"—it was high time to put a stop to her list and officiousness; so "*they are not of my acquaintance*," retorted I, with a little, very little asperity; and just as if I didn't know that was the best possible quali-

fication for writing about them; but all wouldn't do. "Then take suavity of manner!" I looked up, expecting to find a sneer that would send me for refuge to a sublime fit of the sullens for the rest of the evening: yet, no, there she sat, "calm as immortal Justice," and perfectly unconscious, to all appearance, of having made a sarcastic remark; ready, too, to add, "If nothing else will do, write an obituary on the common-place-book you hold in your hand.

This was the point too much, beyond which human endurance will not go; so, overlooking the obvious objection that it was still extant, I began whirling the leaves very rapidly, in search of something on which to base a cavil at the new name conferred on an old book of miscellanies. Again was my own evil star in the ascendant: the more I looked, the more unexceptionable did the title appear. The ground-work exhibited grotesque and multifarious combinations of certain ill-favored characters commonly reputed to be Arabic numerals, (and very appropriate signs no doubt they were for dealers in the black art,) filled in with all sorts of angular, wicked, mysterious-looking little lines, *use* known only to the initiated!

Superadded to these were plans for amalgamating various theological and political creeds, comprising some obscure hints that it might be necessary to expatriate or destroy incorrigible dissentients. Next came a suggestion to canonize the author of that fine old text, *Mind your own business*; and had he only devised a way to enforce the injunction, uniformly and impartially, I, for one, should accede to that proposition immediately. Over and above all, were receipts for making dinners *with the proper materiel*, and geniuses with any, or



none at all, as the case might happen to be. The roses of the garden vied with the flowers of rhetoric in its pages; and could they only be concealed a few centuries, in some out-of-the-way cranny or nook, antiquarians of future ages would, no doubt, assign them a choice niche among their archives, and pore over their contents with visages as elongated as ever graced the resurrection of an Egyptian mummy or Pompeiian pickle. Magnifying-glasses would rise fifty per cent. in the market; for what virtuoso but would wish to examine such an invaluable relic of olden time, and where would be *savant* so decidedly vulgar as to possess good optics of his own?

My friends, if you have pity for the afflicted, prepare to bestow it upon me! Here is that relentless Mentor again, peering over my shoulder, (the impudent minx,) and ready to assail me with all manner of impertinence. Here it comes! "Why, what, in the name of common-sense, are you about?" "Obeying your orders, Mistress Conscience, *a la lettre*." "Not mine, indeed! Did I ever instigate such romance? Why, there isn't a particle of truth in one half you have written!" "What of that! who thinks of truth when writing an obituary?"

L.

#### MY LAST LESSON IN MATHEMATICS.

*Respectfully inscribed to the Savans, my benefactors, in gratitude for their recent endowment of "GREAT MATHEMATICAL POWERS."*

#### ESCULAPIAN ADVICE.

Away to the South, the sunny South,  
 And shun not the wave, and fear not the drouth;  
 Though death to another, 'tis life-breath to thee:  
 Then away to the South, flee quickly, O flee!

The winds of the North too fiercely are driven  
 Along the young heart by weariness riven;  
 For thine, its dreams are high, its thoughts still proud,  
 It is not meet for the burial shroud!

There is life in the gale I bid thee seek;  
 'Twill be light to thine eye and health to thy cheek;  
 Then freely go forth, and strew on its air  
 The roses of death that are clust'ring there

\* \* \* \* \*

I know that the breeze of the South is light,  
 Its clime ever fair, and its wave as bright  
 As if the million eyes that in it sleep  
 Should flash their living light along the deep.

But they say that Death even there hath power  
 To crop the fruit, to nip the bud, and blight the flower;  
 Then how shall I elude that tyrant's art,  
 Whose unfailing home is the human heart?

\* \* \* \* \*

O Death hath many a haunt of fear, but none  
 So sad as the cold, and lone and cheerless one,  
 Where Hope her incense lamp hath ceased to burn,  
 And Life hangs weeping o'er the darkened urn!

### THE OAK SAPLING.

AN APOLOGUE.

As Common-Sense was making one of her occasional circuits through creation, she encountered a trio on the planet called Earth, too deeply absorbed in the discussion of a favorite topic to notice her approach, or, perhaps, too well satisfied with their own good company to wish any addition to the party. Reduced to the disagreeable necessity of enacting listener—a serious inconvenience,

it must be recollected to one of her sex—our traveler was not long in discovering the subject which engrossed the attention of her uncivil acquaintance to be, *the feasibility of transmuting vegetables from one species to another*. A thrifty oak sapling had the honor, it seems, of eliciting, on this occasion, the opinion of the three worthies upon a subject intimately connected with their past experience: whether it was its happiness as well as honor, I shall not pretend to decide.

“It is a maxim of profound wisdom,” exclaimed the senior member, “that HABIT *is a second NATURE*.” “Amen!” cried his myrmidons; “from which it may be inferred that there is NO NATURE *at all*; and—the difference between them being merely the result of accident—that an oak may bear grapes as well as a vine, when it has only acquired the habit of doing so!” “But how is such a habit to be superinduced?” interposes the unwelcome intruder, forgetting, in the novelty of this singular assertion, the slight put upon her person: “how can it be done?”

This provokingly impertinent query could not well be parried; so it was met much with the air of a fashionable about to accost an acquaintance not particularly agreeable, but, on the whole, too respectable or influential to be a proper subject for the cut direct. And, in order to give all due weight to the reply, it was delivered with very imposing solemnity and great deliberation of manner, to the following effect: “That it *may be done*, there is no manner of doubt; for do we not read, ‘Just as the twig is bent, the tree’s inclined;’” “that is to say, that if bent awry, it will grow crooked.” Not deigning to notice this interruption, save by an accession of dignity intended to repress all such insolent

ebullitions in future, the speaker proceeded: "From which it is evident that an oak trained in the form of a vine will assume its properties." "By no means: it is idle to suppose inherent properties can be transferred by mere change of form." "So it is written!" "Not by an unerring pen, however; neither would it sustain your theory if it were."

Resorting to good, sound logic is a condescension which no infallible person should ever be expected to make: the last cavil was, therefore, treated with proper contempt, the reply alluding solely to the first insinuation. "Well, then, if nothing but sacred authority will silence your foolish objections, has not the son of Sirach said, "*Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it?*" And why should not the rule apply to vegetable as well as animal nature? And, beside, are not *we* persons of approved judgment, profound sagacity, and incontestible experience?" "Of considerable experience, I admit," rejoins the interlocutor, glancing significantly toward some sickly-looking shrubs, evidently making a precarious struggle for existence; "but I have yet to learn that it has been successful."

The unparalleled audacity of a remark and appeal so like the *argumentum ad hominem* had well nigh over-set the theory and equanimity of our horticulturists; however, they rally with tolerable grace, put the best face possible upon the matter, and resume with more *nonchalance* and urbanity than could have been expected after so severe a rebuff. "To be sure, our efforts *have not* been as successful as we could wish hitherto, owing to some untoward events, and perhaps to some little inadvertence on our part; but *now*, with our

accumulated experience, concentrated energy and indefatigable zeal, every obstacle must be obviated."

"Admitting, then, that success is certain, (which by the way I very much doubt,) what *gain* will there be sufficient to counterbalance the toil of attainment? Why is an oak less valuable than a vine? Is not 'the monarch of the hills,' the personification of majesty as well as beauty, and as useful as magnificent? Is it not found in 'palace hall and peasant cot,' on desert plain and ocean brine, the mighty instrument that enables man to set his conquering foot on the subject wave and outride the fury of the ocean storm?"

"It is the emblem of pride and arrogance," retort the trio, indignant at the idea of a panegyric on the oak, "and for this alone the whole species ought to be exterminated! It usurps a place that might support a tree bearing fruit nutritious to man, is frequently a partisan in public brawls and private feuds; and further, we approve not those vagrant habits which thou dost covertly advocate, and *it* is so well calculated to sustain. Therefore we are of opinion that 'He, who doeth all things well,' would have done a little better had he created more vines and fewer oaks in our domains; and we are resolved to tolerate, from henceforth, nothing so exceptionable in our premises."

"You must exclude the vine then, if trees are to be condemned for the use made of their productions; it may, with the utmost propriety, be termed the parent of dissipation, and as such is celebrated in the annals of strife."

"They were profane libelers who made it so. Has it not the immortal honor to be the symbol of the Church and its great Lord and Master? It cannot but be well-

pleasing in his sight, when we, his creatures, improve upon his work, by eradicating the properties of the oak and substituting those of his chosen emblem! My friends, let us set about this glorious work immediately. It must infallibly be crowned with success."

"I fear me not—Nature and Fortune are but wayward divinities, and often thwart the best concerted schemes. However, if you will not be persuaded, 'go on and prosper.' I will call when I return, and should you succeed, may avail myself of your skill in behalf of some eaglets, that you will doubtless think proper to convert into geese."

"By all means, and we shall be most happy to oblige you, though we cannot exactly coincide with you in opinion."

The debate thus amicably adjusted, both parties being, as usual, the more confirmed in their own opinion, the process was commenced immediately after Common Sense, (who was never a party to such an experiment,) had taken her leave. With one accord, the victors in the "wordy war" repair to an adjacent forest, select a thrifty-looking shrub and transfer it without further loss of time to their parterre—partly for the convenience of having it near at hand, but more to remove it from the contagion of vicious oaken example. Not an acorn was tolerated in its presence lest it should recall unfavorable associations; vines of unexceptionable deportment surrounded it on every side, and a hundred ligaments on the trunk and branches, said most unequivocally, "this is the way, walk ye in it!" Attentions, suited to the importance of the subject and the dignity of the occasion, were duly administered "from night to morn, from morn to dewy eve," and nothing but the indomitable

pertinacity of an oak, prevented it from being a vine of most exemplary demeanor. But alas for obstinacy, it neutralizes every effort for improvement, and so it did in this instance.

When Common Sense first saw the PROTEGE, it had but just emerged from etiolation; still she fancied its native vigor not sufficiently exhausted to prevent the incipient spirit of rebellion from soon developing itself; though not caring to mar the enjoyment of others, merely to show her own superior discernment, she magnanimously forbore to express such an opinion. The experimentalists, meanwhile, continued as sanguine as ever, and urged her to bring forward the eaglets, but she "preferred waiting the result of the present experiment, or until such time at least as the birds should have become sufficiently hardy to endure the process without endangering their lives."

But let no one imagine our trio suffered aught, of minor consequence, to abstract their attention from what they deemed of paramount importance.

They were indefatigable in their exertions, every superfluous excrescence was carefully removed; but no sooner was a refractory shoot lopped off on one side, than a dozen others sprang in its place, or some other equally exceptionable, till, at length, a more distorted-looking shrub never set every principle of order at defiance, or cast its uncouth shade on the fair face of nature. Indeed, the returning wanderer seemed half inclined to class it, with—"Forms might be worshiped on the bended knee, and yet the second dread command be free!" There were leaves in plenty, and boughs in abundance, and *angles* in every variety the most devoted lover of geometry could desire; but for the graceful

curve of the vine, it was nowhere to be found, and for grapes, there were none of them. But that was no manner of consequence, for had they been hung on the horns of the moon, they would have been equally accessible. It resembled nothing in nature very nearly; but if a comparison must be had, an Ishmaelite and a Bramble will contest the honor of election.

When Common Sense next re-visited the scene, she was received quite as cordially as most people greet one whose advice they have spurned, when he comes to see his prediction verified. There was a change in the PROTEGE; its native vigor had been exhausted in futile efforts to escape its unnatural confinement, the hues of autumn were ripe mid the green glories of summer, and it was evident it could not long survive a monument of defeat! It was no time to taunt them with their discomfiture, it was too apparent! "STRANGE," said they; "*and after all the pains we have taken*—PASSING STRANGE!" "Not at all," says Common Sense—"the captive eagle will pine in bondage, the mountain oak will wither and die in an ungenial soil, while the culturist is vainly looking for fruit to recompense his toil.

"The monarchs of crag and cliff may bask in the sun, or revel in the storm, for me, I set not an intruder's foot in their dominions!"

GLANDULA.

A—N. Y., 1835.



## LETTER XI.

EVERYTHING IN GENERAL AND NOTHING IN PARTICULAR.

TO S. J. S.

L—, Tenn., April, 1836.

MY DEAREST BROTHER:

IF you find my letters resemble "angel visits" at all, you ought to be very thankful, instead of complaining that "for the last twelvemonth they are becoming *brief*," as well as "few and far between."

I am sorry the circumstance has given you pain, and do assure you it did not originate in any waning interest in your welfare; but was merely the natural and almost inevitable result of extraneous circumstances and our relative change of position. "Othello's occupation 's gone," you no longer need lecturing, or if you do, I shall hand you over to your tutor, who will, no doubt, perform the operation much more *secundum artem*.

You know it is always *my pleasure* to contribute to yours, so if by virtue of seniority I happen to possess any information which you prefer to receive through *my hands*, it is entirely at your service; but Stanley, *I am not* your superior, and wish to be considered as such no longer! It is disagreeable to be overrated; when anything is elevated above the true medium, it has to fall as much below, before it recovers the equilibrium, and for this *facilis descensus Averni*, or as Falstaff has it, "Alacrity in sinking," I have no very special predilection. We all know what to expect from a hot-house growth, and it is not the possession of any extra facul-

ties, or the excess of ordinary ones, that makes me "so much older in intellect than years;" but the simple fact, that adverse fortunes forced such as I have into premature action. It is only the worm can be trampled with impunity—oppression is sure to strengthen what she cannot fatally depress. But "Ill betide the school wherein I learned to ride," so no more of your "*on dits*," they may flatter but do not please. Much as Hercules would have liked a compliment on his spinning, or Charles the Twelfth the reputation of taste in artificial flower-making, do I relish these suspicious commendations. *Yours*, of course, are not ironical and intended to quiz; but where "the hand of affection guides the pen," the partiality of friendship is liable to bias the judgment. And besides, "what has a woman's fearful heart to do with aught like fame," unless it be to bask in the soft radiance of its light as reflected from the brow of another? So speak me no more speeches, repeat me no more reports, I entreat you.

And still less would I have you suspect "the change in your feelings respecting the relative value of 'things temporal and things spiritual,'" to have wrought any in mine toward you. Not so, my brother! It is matter of no ordinary gratulation, that you are now free to devote your time, your thoughts and energies to pursuits which your situation so imperiously imposes, *unannoyed* by the harassing and forever recurring conviction, that the mightier interests of the future are all uncared for! I may well envy you *the calm happiness of an assured belief*, the lofty serenity with which one, who has anchored his hopes steadfastly on the future, can, sometimes at least, if not always, survey the shifting scenes of life's panorama; but there must be no alienation of

affection, no diminution of confidence between us, no reserve, no estrangement, unless you would indeed have me believe that there is really something odiously self-righteous, prescriptive and hateful in all religion!

So just write on whatever you feel like writing, and never doubt that it will all be welcome, even should you take it into your head to be so excessively good that your "guardian angel" could venture to give up his garrison, and you to play Rhadamanthus's old woman, and set about correcting everybody's faults but your own. Though in that case you might lack for canonization very shortly, for I should be certain to have you down on my list as a sort of supplementary saint, more especially as there are some vacancies, and I find but one here who would, even with the proper training, be competent to take the highest honors. However, there is little danger of that, I opine, and perhaps it was not well, or wise in me, to suppress the fact, that subsequent to my attack of scarlet fever, in May last, I was never able to trace more than a dozen lines at a time prior to my leaving New York, and had not fully recovered from the debilitating effects of a change from limestone to river water, and *vice versa*, when I wrote you last; for it seems you have contrived to torment yourself just as much as if you had actually known the worst.

But I will just thank you not to be quite so ingenious in making yourself miserable hereafter, and see no great use in your worrying yourself to death to discover "the tone of my feelings from the tenor of my letters." They form no certain or infallible criterion—Cowper was not the only one who ever wrote a facetious article to ward off a legion of the blues—and if my spirits are not always at the alto pitch, you are not bound to suppose yourself

the cause—though I don't know, being one of Plato's chickens, perhaps you can't help being a little conceited; but there are others who sometimes take the liberty of disturbing my equanimity—his saintship for instance. You know that as executor on that farce of a will, he became heir to the spirit in which it was dictated, and I do believe, thinks me a more potent witch than she of Endor; for notwithstanding he considers Evelyn altogether too immaculate to be "art and part" to any of my misdoings, he is so jealous of a "malign influence" *somewhere*, that his last dispatches exhibit anything but dispatch. Verily, he ought to go down on his knees, morning and evening, and pray long and fervently for the health and prosperity, spiritual and temporal, of Mr. Secretary Woodbury, (I presume he never heard of Junius,) he owes it to him in common justice for having revived a phrase so precisely embodying what he wished to think. It requires great effort you know, at times, to get an idea to assume a palpable form; but despite his implicit confidence and her own peerless perfection, Evelyn will "manage" him so, that his aversion to me shall not light upon you. And much as it grieves me, (knowing him to be a very cordial "hater,") I feel bound to say to himself and others, charitable enough to close their eyes so resolutely to the fine assortment of imperfections which I have, and endow me so liberally with those I have not, that they really *must not* flatter themselves I am "*insane*" enough to reciprocate their ill-will, or do anything worse than "*let them alone very severely,*" for indeed I do hope to hear their disapprobation very stoically, so long as it continues the same matter of perfect indifference that it always has been, save where your interests were concerned.

Your opinion, however, is quite another affair; but it's clearly undutiful of you, to suppose I "règret the sacrifice I have made, and pine for my native New York and the society," *voluntarily* "relinquished." My BROTHER, do you call the unrestricted exercise of your own good-will and pleasure *a sacrifice*? Well, perhaps it may be so to you men, who are *born* "lords of the ascendant," though in that case you must be a very self-sacrificing set, and it's melancholy to think how you must yearn for the luxury of being more amenable to good advice than you commonly are, and what martyrdom you will endure rather than allow us "womankind" the special treat of "a little brief authority." But did it never occur to your wisdom, that it is little, very little, for the bird of passage to shake from her dewy plume the germ of a mighty tree, but much if when faint and worn with wandering, she can hope to return, fold her weary wing and nestle securely beneath its spreading branches? As respects the other intimation—

I tread a path I shall not return,  
 For a fiery spirit goads me on;  
 And the haughty heart will inly burn  
 To grasp the ancient glories gone.

For life, for life I fly the toil,  
 Nor reck I of my being's wane;  
 Let but its lamp supply the oil  
 That lights thee on to glory's wane.

Let but one thought of me awake  
 The sleeping god within thy soul,  
 How freely would these heartstrings break  
 To hail thee *first* at honor's goal.

I care not if the cypress shade,  
 Fling shadows o'er this form of mine,  
 Let but these hands the ivy braid,  
 For that resplendent brow of thine,

Let me but see a lofty race,  
Once more a noble name adorn,  
I'll be the star that hides its face,  
Before the rising god of morn!

Lastly, no insinuations about society, if you please. I find that which is very good: chiefly among middle-aged married people, it is true; but that is because ladies *marry earlier* here in the South-West than in almost any other civilized country on the globe. Of course they cannot be expected to know much about matters and things in general; for it takes *time* to observe and reflect, and they never get beyond sixteen before they get out of the state of "single blessedness," or twenty-five ever after—they may become widows, you know—unless compelled to don a cap or wig to hide their gray hairs.

I believe they were all rather scandalized at not seeing the former instead of "*natural curls*," on my arrival; so, to mystify them a little more, often refer carelessly, as if eye-witness, to events that occurred about the time of my birth, or perhaps five or ten years earlier, and then, again, don't choose or don't feel able to recollect others that transpired as much later: for all of which, I dare say, they think me a very bungling romancer; but I can see they are puzzled, and enjoy it finely. A straight-forward Yankee query, or regular cross-examination, would soon spoil the fun; but that would be the *ne plus ultra* of impertinence, and no Southron could be so rude. However, no lady—no Northern one particularly—should ever compromise her reputation for common-sense and veracity by specifying her age at all. No lady under fifty is expected to tell hers correctly; nor even then, if she chance to be widow or

spinster: so, all she would gain by speaking the truth would be, *to be suspected of telling a falsehood*; it being customary to add at least *two years* to the reckoning of any one reported by herself, or friends, to be under twenty, and *five* to that of those admitting themselves so much in the decline of life as to have reached what legal courtesy calls "years of discretion." Should any *temeraire* say "*thirty*," the hearer would, of course, take a little more latitude, and add another *five* to his extra "allowance."

*Mais revenons*, I have *as much* society as I care for; though the misery of these little villages is, rival parties are forever on the alert "foolishly and gallantly to stab and dirk each other for the crown o' the causeway!" Consequently, the unlucky wight who has the bad taste to fancy "sitting on a rail," is in imminent danger of being precipitated from his "high estate" into the mire of neglect. Could I feel assured no other would ever annoy me, I should esteem myself singularly fortunate. The genius for "improvement" is by no means peculiar to the land of "blue laws;" but the "go-ahead" system doesn't seem to flourish in Tennessee as well as might be expected, considering that the phrase is indigenous. They would cut a canal in New England, or construct a railroad in New York, in less time than it takes to pave a bit of a sidewalk or make a common twenty-mile turnpike in this region. If I might be allowed a conjecture on anything so much above a woman's ken as *the cause* of this difference, I should say there were too many ruling members in all bodies corporate, and too few subordinates in proportion. There is much practical good sense in the vulgar adage, "*too many cooks*

*spoil the broth*”—to say the least, they retard the cooking. MOVING SLOW is, too, one of the prescriptive rights of all great bodies, and contractors here cannot avail themselves of the impetus which “EXTRA WAGES” gives to industry. It is no object with them to get three months’ work done in two, for, if the poor, silly operatives were perverse enough to die in consequence, it might not be their own exclusive concern; and, besides, they have them to feed, whether they work or not. Slavery hangs like an incubus on the wheels of internal improvement; but the recoil affects the master, not the slave, who is your born conservative, and jealous as any Lord Eldon of radical innovation and new-fangled notions.

Now, for all this, I expect that when that picture I once asked you for does come, the first thing I shall spy will be “a great pearl,” peering out from under a nice crimped cap, surmounted by a huge pair of iron spectacles, like old Dr. Franklin’s! Hope you’ll not have the conscience to make me look as much like an old grimalkin as he did, if the limners have given us a correct version of the matter; for, truly, there must be “more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of” in *woman’s* philosophy, or the owner of that baboon-looking phiz had never electrified the world with anything but a laugh at his own expense. Nobody shall have one at mine though, on seeing me dished up in the *soup maigre* of an album; of that I am resolved. I have a perfect horror of the things: there is not a gentleman in all the wide length and breadth of the land has half my contemptible opinion of the pretty nothings; and, much as I regret to disoblige so highly esteemed a



friend of yours as Mrs. D., must really write "*inadmissible*" on her request. Tell her—anything else; but *here* I am quite impracticable.

"Some people never know when they are well off," and it seems you are one of the number; but, after giving you sufficient time to achieve the perusal of this, (and digest the Lecture on Political Economy,) I shall look impatiently for a response. *Gentlemen* should *always* be punctual; though *ladies* cannot, of course, be expected to practice such a counting-house virtue, or submit to the drudgery of writing very often! Evelyn requests me to send her love with mine, and says "you may now expect to hear from her very soon." So, *adieu, au revoir, mon cher frere.*

Ever, ever yours,

LOUISE.

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## LETTER XII.

### GOSSIP WITH AN OLD SCHOOLMATE.

*L——, Tenn., May —, 1836*

"VERY WELL, MISS LUCY:"

TRY some new legerdemain next time, will you? You are *seen through now*, I do assure you, politic as you may have thought yourself, in attempting to atone for your own sins of omission by pretending *how well* other people kept me in remembrance! But all health and prosperity to the citizens of \* \* \* ; "may they live forever," for a noble, highly-cultivated, and intellectual specimen of humanity as they are. Certes, they must be all that, if they persist in calling *me* "beautiful;"

which no one else does "now-a-days," except some dim-sighted old man, unsophisticated, passionless child, or dreamy youth whose brain is filled with classic visions of Junos, Minervas, and Calliopes! And, really, it is quite a relief: who cares to screw a smirk on to one side of the face, while a sneer comes of its own accord on the other, and all to return a civil answer to a silly speech? Not I; do you?

Tell that splendid villain, L——, he had better keep his wife alive as long as he can; for, when *she* is gone, I intend to take him, *nolens volens*, just to punish his outrageous impudence; and won't poor Eveleen's wrongs be amply revenged under my administration? His threat of discharging his pill-box at "the counselor" means, I suppose, that *he* would be a formidable competitor. If you suspect it implies anything more, ask him: how should I divine? I presume he intends his "*intimation* that the year eighteen hundred and thirty-eight has come and gone," for a stroke of naivete; but it can't pass! He has been quite as near the tropics as I am—has always had the use of his eyes, ears and *tongue* in great perfection, and must, of course, know that all females coming from beyond "thirty-seven degrees, twenty-eight minutes, North," are regarded, in this latitude, as so many importations from Noah's Ark—sisters or daughters of the proprietor, names not mentioned; and, consequently, that his "precautions" would, if possible, be even more superfluous than his "apprehensions."

"But, really, Miss," your late trip seems to have been quite a voyage of discovery, and very successful, too, judging from the quantity of "gold" that glitters in your pages. If you need any farther information

respecting "gold pencils" and "diamond repeaters," apply to Mr. Tonguetied Telltale—"tied" in the middle, I mean, so that it runs at both ends; *he* is a very competent judge of the articles: perhaps you may have seen some specimen of his taste in *bijouterie*. And now it seems he has turned commentator in addition to his other numerous accomplishments, and elucidated "certain obscure passages in a vague rumor which you never fully understood," (simply because it was never intended you should,) "very much to your satisfaction." I know you got your enlightenment nowhere else, so please say to this Paul Pry, junior, that he really does intrude, and I seldom forget; so that if ever I do get a chance to pay him off for his gratuitous tattling, he may safely reckon on compound interest, though I ought, I suppose, to be very thankful that he didn't allow the affair to transpire while I was exposed to moral and matrimonial lectures extraordinary, from the whole tribe of Saints, who would in that case have felt a redoubled zeal for my conversion, not to mention a very godly yearning to have all that "worldly wealth," as well as my "surpassing talents," brought into the service of the Sanctuary." But take shame to yourself for your former stupidity, and say nothing more about having *recently* made the precious discovery "that my price must be rather high, as neither the Miser's Son nor the miser's gold could buy" me, nor my pedigree! The latter was all "Yea Verily" wanted, I am confident; for when did *he* come to the magnanimous conclusion to encumber *himself* with a wife? Why precisely when he found that I had unrestricted intercourse with a certain clique, into which he and his, with all their wealth and sycophancy, could then come only just "so far and

no farther," and not before. This thing called pride of birth, or family pride, may, like the principle of "original sin," (of which perhaps it is only a ramification,) be very unreasonable and absurd; but you may argue it out of existence, and ridicule it into nonentity, and when you have done up starts the hydra in full life and vigor. So I give you fair notice, that if ever I am free to "commit matrimony," "noble or not I," will be my motto. I am, at best, no very devout believer in *la belle passion*: but *this standing up in the presence of one's Maker, to swear to three falsehoods in a breath,* seems to me rather a hazardous experiment for one pair of ordinary lungs, and as I don't happen to belong to the aforementioned tribe of saints, think it just possible that mine might fail me in my hour of utmost need, and leave me to die of strangulation; for how a woman expects to "*honor*" one she contemns, and "*obey*" one she considers her inferior, exceeds my comprehension!

I am not so incorrigibly stupid though, that I cannot learn the worth of money by the want of it, and do admit that "a fine fortune's a fine thing," and 150,000 a very goodly array of figures; but set a cipher at their head, and then see! If it does not materially alter their specific value, there must be some little flaw in my "great mathematical powers" somewhere.

But supposing ever so respectable a figure to stand at the head of such a fortune, I doubt whether it would much conduce to the happiness of a woman without any to become its nominal mistress. "Mated not matched," is a remark that would too often apply to such a connection. Moore's "hearts never changing and brow never cold," is very good poetry, nothing more. He has himself distinctly referred to the "poet's privilege" of being

“three removes from truth,” and *men*, with their callous sensibilities and overweening estimate of wealth, will, in their moments of irritation or heedless levity, let slip no opportunity for taunting their wives with the want of it. And then there is no true woman but must feel, that in that one hour of sorrow and shame, she has paid an exorbitant price for the wealth of a world, could it all have been laid at her feet; were it subject to her control, how freely would she give it back, to have those words of bitterness *unthought* and unspoken! They were an insult offered to the defenseless, an indignity to the helpless, and “the iron” has “entered the soul.”

Men know nothing of all this, for the reason, I believe, that very few find any such fastidious scruples in their own bosoms. So they can “put gold in their purse,” it matters little to them how they come by it; what they *have* that will they *hold*, and there is so deeply interwoven with every fiber of their natures a calm consciousness of power, a pervading sense of superiority, that it never enters *their* heads to suppose that any *woman born*, can possibly think of *them* as inferiors; (the poor conceited creatures how they *are* mistaken;) but woman is a being of a different order. She is seldom allowed the disposal of property, nor does she greatly desire it; for she has learned to feel that it is *nothing to her*, further than it administers to her present comfort and obviates the apprehension of future want. A cross-grained temper, or capricious will, often neutralizes one or the other of these advantages, and any man, possessed of sufficient energy to command the admiration and respect of a sensible woman, can easily secure her the former. I, you know, should never be able to comprehend how any “son of Adam” could confer a favor by wedding my

father's daughter; then why should I subject myself to the living puppyism, or posthumous tyranny of any "wayward clod of marl?" If the old Roman laws did classify *women* and *children* as "goods and chattels," I know no precedent for considering *men* household furniture, and see no reason why they should be expected to come "in a concatenation accordingly" among my ideas of matters and things.

You see, I have law, and gospel, as well as reason and common sense, on my side yet, so no more about "*caprice*," if you please. Nature endowed me with a spice too little of vanity, and too much of pride, for a regular coquette; a fact in natural history which you ought to have learned long ago, either from your own observation, or the philosophic acumen of the "right worshipful" Dr. Longtongue, one too, which you will please impart to any of your new found Athenian acquaintances, who may have been heedless enough to contract an erroneous opinion.

I regret to hear that that once delightful village is losing its social and literary character, while advancing in wealth and external prosperity; "*in my time*" it was "like Paris in the days of the gay Boccacio, a place To know the reasons of things and the causes of the same as became a gentleman."

Please remind your cousin, Mrs. O., that I *made* my "loyal subject" no "promise" in which *she* did not fully participate; consequently, could only have agreed to go into "committee of the whole," and see what ways and means could be devised for his relief, "if in making the whole tour of the United States, he failed to dispose of his single-blessedness." In no supposable case did I ever stipulate to take so stale an article off his hands!

It has not been in market so very long, to be sure; but then it is considerably damaged by frequent exposal. I think one of his old "flames" used to say, "that no young lady of his acquaintance would ever *die* an 'old maid,' for want of having had, at least, *one opportunity* to inscribe *Mrs.* on her tomb-stone; though, no doubt, he and other gentlemen think *they all deserve to do so*, for having rejected him, simply because others had done so before them. But that isn't the fair way of stating the case; no gentleman likes to be made the *pis aller* among his compeers: then why should not a high-minded, sensitive lady consider it a covert insult rather than a "*compliment*," (Heaven, save the mark!—I wonder what these men think they are?) for one of the bipeds to propose to her, after having made it obvious to herself and all her acquaintance that he would prefer half a dozen others, if they were to be had? However, this sort of reasoning will not serve your turn, should he chance to address you a year or two hence; so, if you happen to fancy him, (and, really, I see no reason why you might not,) do not be vexed if I say *take him*, for he would be certain to make a *caro sposo* of the first water; and you know he had never seen you when making love to your predecessors, a circumstance which makes all the difference imaginable.

Now, in place of all this nonsense, I dare say I might be much better employed in reading you a wise lecture on the inexpediency of going abroad into society before leaving school. And, indeed, I should cavil thereat, if you were not situated exactly as you are at home; first, because it creates the impression that you are several years older than you are; second, because it unsettles your mind for study; and, third, because (if the whole

truth must be told,) I don't fancy being seduced into so much egotism as I find I am by your allusions to past times and old associates. The last time I wrote Stanley, I had to forbid him "speaking me any more speeches;" but it's no use trying to stop a woman's tongue, (or pen,) so I merely forewarn you, that, when "the eye of a painter, the tongue of a poet, and the brain of a philosopher" happened to be located in the head of a woman, there is some little danger that the whole concern, ("the face of an angel" not excepted,) may be turned topsy-turvy by such excessive compliments, coming, too, from such a source. If that doesn't suffice, I shall esteem it my "bounden duty" to apprise your honored papa, that, unless he keeps you at home next vacation, there is a remote possibility that you may, in time, become as great a gossip as any gentleman of his acquaintance. This may sound rather odd to people who hold to the old version and take it all for gospel; but you, I presume, have often admired the consummate tact and great generosity of "the lords paramount," in making over to us, the "better half" of creation, not only the exclusive merit of their own excessive talking, but also the entire renown of their own extensive achievements in the tell-tale line; and, really, they do deserve great credit for their cleverness! Isn't it rare fun to see one of them pretend to rouse up from his book, nap, or newspaper, just long enough to say, "Do hush your foolish gossip," (how did he know it was gossip if he hadn't been listening?) and then relapse, looking quite as wise and a little more virtuous than ever; though he knows very well he has just absorbed the pith of the whole matter, and is now busy digesting and arranging it in a more available form. But "the cream of the



joke" is, to see old maids, and other old women, tricked out in borrowed plumes, as high-priestesses of Madam Rumor, when we all know they must derive their inspiration, directly or indirectly, from the husbands, sons, fathers and brothers of themselves or their acquaintance. I have been "takin' notes," mentally, on this subject, for years, "and, faith," I'd like "to prent 'em;" but it would never do, for there would be all the *primum mobiles* so incensed at finding the tables turned, and themselves detected and exposed, that they would contrive some way to make their aids and accomplices feel so highly insulted at being rated as mere "cats'-paws," after having been considered principals from time immemorial, that poor Truth would fain have to betake herself to her old well again, and there's no telling whether she ever would make another effort to emerge!

Should you find yourself rather annoyed and disgusted by this undisguised exhibition of innate hauteur, just thank your own foolish temerity for the infliction; and remember that your humble servant is more excusable for making Number One preside rather ostentatiously in her pages than you could possibly be, while residing among what are to both of us familiar scenes. So, in place of so much "foreign news," please oblige me with a little "domestic intelligence" in your next!

You will also please tender my best respects to your excellent father, and accept for "Charlie" and yourself the assurance of my unabated interest in your welfare.

Yours, in all sincerity,

LOUISE.

## LETTER XIII.

ON THE DECEASE OF A FAVORITE BROTHER.

TO O. F. G. AND LADY.

*B—e, Tenn., Aug. 25, 1836.*

MY RESPECTED FRIENDS:

It is with great effort, though mournful pleasure, that I turn, at length, from the deepest gloom of self-communion, to commune awhile with those I believe willing to sympathize with me, though it be not in joy, but in grief!

You may have heard ere this, that the brother, for the furtherance of whose fortunes my sister and self were "strangers in a land not ours," is numbered no more among the living! But none can ever learn, save by bitter experience, how utterly desolate is the heart when its last bud of promise is withered—its last hope is blighted—when the solitary star is stricken from the horizon, how deep and hopeless is the darkness that ensues! When last I stood by the grave of a buried father, I vainly deemed that fate had done her worst—that come what would "the worst had fallen that could befall"—vainly indeed, when at that very moment I was concentrating all the powers, and entwining all the affections of my nature around one, who was to *me* in place of all the social relations of life. But oh! we dreamed not of this! The thought of him, the noble, the talented, and the good, as the pride of his name, the ornament of "earth's high places," not as the tenant of the lowly tomb! To him we looked for a completion of the brilliant profes-

sional career, which closed so prematurely in our father's early grave. For this have we endured hardship and courted danger, self-denial, and toil, "counting" not even our lives "as dear unto ourselves," when weighed in the balance with aught that "could minister to his pleasure or his profit." And now, the clods of the valley press heavily down on his young bosom; but colder and heavier far on the hearts of the living! And oh, the bitter agony of his last hour of consciousness, its specter will haunt me to the grave! True, he died not "untended and unmourned;" but where was he? Far away from the friends of his youth and the home of his childhood, and where were they who should have stood by that bed of death and soothed the parting spirit? Far off on the distant paths of life, sacrificing ease, and health, and social intercourse, submitting cheerfully to care, privation, neglect, and indignity—closing the avenues of the heart to all affection that might beguile a thought from that shrine of the soul's deep idolatry, and counting it all honor and happiness thus to sacrifice and be sacrificed for him—and all for *this*, for this! Then, too, comes the maddening idea, that a knowledge of this absorbing interest in him was undoubtedly one cause of that "*intense application*" that accelerated his early doom.

One of his classmates writes: "The physicians think your brother's disease a 'hectic, terminating unexpectedly in a brain fever, incurred probably by too early and intense application to study, after a partial recovery from a severe attack of typhus.' He died June 10th, and was interred on the evening of the 12th."

His mortal remains may incorporate with the valley of the Connecticut; his memory *there* pass away with his

associates, but *we shall remember!* The one verdant spot in the wide waste of existence, the lone spring in its desert, they are not lightly forgotten, though the eye be gladdened no more with their beauty, nor the heart rejoice in their loveliness! And oh!

He comes no more—he comes no more—  
The cherished dead whom we bewail;  
But hopeless hearts shall long deplore  
The sleeper in that distant vale.

He was the magnet that could bind,  
Thoughts, affection, all to him;  
The brilliant focus that combined,  
Rays of a light that grows not dim.

The light of love that ne'er expires,  
Though hope no more may feed its flame;  
And wrecked ambition shun its pyres,  
To brood o'er dreams of baffled fame.

He was the fountain at whose tide  
Our thirsty spirits turned to drink,  
When other founts grew chill, or dried,  
As life hung fainting o'er their brink.

We know that he has passed to lands,  
Fairer than all that wooed his stay;  
But who that treads life's burning sands,  
Exults for streams, far, far away.

It may be unmitigated selfishness too, that induces me to obtrude this expression of my sorrows upon you, when *I know* that how much soever you may sympathize with me in this sore affliction, it is utterly impossible for you to realize how very, *very* different is *his* loss from that of a brother under ordinary circumstances; and, therefore, as you have been pleased to evince a very cordial interest in my personal welfare, will endeavor to give

some account of my present position and prospects, though it seems almost sacrilege to think or speak of anything but him.

I reside with Col., brother to Dr. C. H. B., formerly of your place. He is an old Virginian, energetic and public-spirited; and both himself and lady make every exertion to render me comfortable as possible. With society I have little intercourse; but what I do see is uncommonly good, and has every appearance of being perfectly harmonious. My health is similar to what it was during the early half of our acquaintance, and I am taking wine very freely, not that I care to be well, but because it is inconvenient to be sick. The school consists of older and better classified pupils, and is consequently more agreeable than that of your village; my "prospects" are said also to be flattering, but it is nothing to me *now*, and I am not flattered. When my thoughts first reverted to the necessity of some action in reference to the subject, I should have canceled the engagement unhesitatingly, could it have been honorably done. But it is as well perhaps as it is, having no longer an object in life, it is of course no object for me to live, and the remaining dregs in my cup of bitterness will probably be exhausted sooner in this way than any other. A similar feeling, I believe, prompted sister E. to accept the proposals of the gentleman who, you know, was disappointed at finding me pre-engaged. The first half of my journey was as agreeable as could have been expected; the last proved very lonely and fatiguing.

Speaking of the route from Nashville, reminds me of the promise to recant my heresy, (if such I found it to be,) in claiming for New York the precedence over Tennessee in point of natural scenery.

Very possibly the cloud which had fallen on my hopes, might have cast a gloom over the landscape, obscuring many of its beauties, still enough remained to prove that I was not altogether blind to their loveliness, yet not sufficient to make me retract my former opinion. True, "the forests *are not* surpassed" by any I ever saw, and there is almost a moral grandeur about the ancient elm, and giant oak, and lordly sycamore, and in these the South and West is unrivaled; and the stupendous "six days labor of a God" seems almost re-enacted in your presence, as you bound rapidly along the narrow ridge, dividing ravines, which, as the eye vainly attempts to explore their verdant depths, seem as unbroken a wilderness as when the sun cast his first warm glance of admiration over the magnificent solitudes of a new-born creation! But when the overwhelming tide of emigration shall have rolled its resistless wave over the whole length and breadth of the land; when the improvidence of the settlers shall have insinuated their "wasty ways" into the inmost recesses of the now impervious wild, stripping the forest of its pride and the vale of its beauty; when the ruthless hand of civilization shall have despoiled the mountain of its crown, and driven Flora from her home in the dell; where, then, will be the claims of Tennessee to compete with New York? New York! with her hundred lakes and rivers, now reposing in some beautiful valley, soft as the smile of sleeping infancy, now dashing madly onward in scorn of all that obstructs their career! her magnificent highlands, with their "cloud-capped brows," and "hues all born in heaven!" and the never-to-be-forgotten, peerless *Niagara*, the last impress of the finger of God on his own perfect creation!

Oh no, I cannot yield New York; though I can tell why Evelyn does not appreciate its beauties: she has not *seen* the half of them, *her* observation having been limited, chiefly, to the line of the Erie Canal, which, with the exception of a few fine points, intersects the least picturesque portions of the state, crossing sections of ten, twenty, thirty, and even sixty miles in extent, which would closely resemble the "bottoms" in the district, had not the careless woodsmen of the last century, in their haste to effect a clearing, kindled fires, which stripped the forest of its foliage for thousands and tens of thousands of acres around. The hand of Time has partially repaired the ravage of man and the elements; but hundreds of these skeletons of the past yet remain, lifting their scathed trunks, and naked arms and blackened brows to the sunbeams, and casting the gloom of their own desolation alike on their own upstart children of the forest and the sons of their ancient spoliators! In truth, it is not easy to imagine anything more dismal; still, these are but specks on the fair face of the state; yet, I fancy, sister's disparaging opinion of its scenery may fairly be traced to the disagreeable impression received, while an invalid child, from this very source.

Being "scant o' room," I must close by tendering my compliments to yourselves and daughters, and the families of Messrs. A., B. and C. Please say to the Misses D. that I will redeem the promise made them *soon*, though they must no longer expect to derive any pleasure from its fulfillment.

With great respect, I remain

Your obliged and sorrowing friend,

\* \* \*

"THEY MAY DEEM 'TIS THE LOVE OF ANOTHER."

*Explanatory Lines, addressed to Mrs. H. H. B.*

They may deem 'tis the love of another  
 Wakes the tear that is falling from me ;  
 But my heart's "*one love*," O my brother!  
 Was given, in life's dawning, to thee !  
 Its dark'ning shadow o'er the soul  
 No other love had power to cast ;  
 For thou wert to existence's goal  
 My guiding star through all the past.  
 In thy grave there have perished  
 The glad tones of thy mirth,  
 And the hopes I had cherished  
 From the hour of thy birth!

Proudly thy image rose before me ;  
 But life is dim since thou art gone,  
 And one, in thought, is bending o'er thee,  
 Who mourns that morning vision flown !  
 Light smile and careless jest may seem  
 A lighter spirit's echoing tone ;  
 But, O my soul ! thy wand'ring dream  
 Is not of earth—to thee 'tis lone !  
 Yes, "the last link *is* broken"  
 That could bind me to earth ;  
 For the death dirge is spoken  
 O'er thy genius and worth !

*December 26,*

"AND PILATE SAID, 'WHAT IS TRUTH!'"

Aye, what is it? Ages on ages roll,  
 Yet bring no answer! Millions on millions



Echo back that Roman quest; yet still  
The spirit-thirst remains unslaked!

LIGHT for the darkened mind!  
Helpless immortal, on the shores of Time  
I wander in a labyrinth of doubt:  
Coming, I know not whence—tending,  
I know not whither!

“Blind leaders of the blind!” O ye  
Do still persist in “darkening counsel,”  
With high-scounding phrase, devoid of knowledge!  
And God’s own sacred Word, full of all high  
And holy things, is but a sealed book,  
Or one vast mystery, to minds like mine,  
Bound in “iron gyves” sectarian hands  
Have forged for human intellect!

Vain, *vain*—but, O that I had never heard  
A text, or sermon, homily or prayer  
Till now! Then Truth, with all her majesty,  
Might glide gently into my troubled heart,  
Charming its wayward thoughts to peace—winning  
For guerdon, glad homage to her Author!

\* \* \* \* \*

My very brain is graven o’er and o’er  
With “creeds” and “proofs,” and “commentaries!”  
I see the sophistry, yet feel its thrall—  
Chafe in my bonds, but cannot shake them off!  
Unhallowed hands have grafted *human* thought  
Upon *thy* context, Inspiration!  
I do detect the fraud, but not discern  
The truth. Philistines of the moral world,  
Ye have destroyed my mental vision!  
Worse, *worse!*—ye do traduce your Maker

To his face! The MIGHTY MOCKER! scoffing  
 And taunting wretches he has made and marked  
 For vengeance—making fair show of pardon  
 Not to be won—insulting with false hope  
 The hopeless! 'Tis *false!* Ye paint a demon,  
 Not a God; and meet for such the worship  
 Ye award him.

The spirit's mystic love  
 For all of melody and beauty,  
 What is it but unconscious incense  
 That the soul wafts ever to its Maker,  
 Untiring and untired? And yet, "'tis *sin!*"

Life's noblest gifts must be despised;  
 Proud monuments of Thought, that genius builds  
 For immortality—a malison  
 Is on—we may not turn to scan you!  
 Music, blest echo of archangel harps  
 Pealing their mighty anthems through all time  
 And space, thou too, *thou too*, must be contemned!  
 Fair Flowers, that are the poetry of earth,  
 E'en as the stars are that of Heaven,  
 Written with God's own finger on the page  
 Of vast creation, ye too are under ban—  
 We must not dream to love ye!

"Diviners,  
 Ye are mad!" Know ye full well  
 What 'tis ye offer? Scorn for *His* gifts,  
 Scorn fit homage to Omnipotence?  
 'Tis impious! Away, *away!* never,  
 No *never!* 'neath dogmatists of sects  
 And schools, shall quail the lofty spirit  
 God hath given! \* \* \* \*

\* \* \* Turn we to earth, Man writes  
 No corollaries there! The happy sun,  
 And gentle dews, the loving light of night's  
 Most holy eyes, efface the sully  
 Impress!

Father of life,  
 And light! one beam from thy effulgence shed,  
 To guide the deep, impassioned worshiper,  
 Of "all that makes life, poetry, and beauty,"  
 From Nature's peerless shrine, up to the Throne  
 Of Nature's mighty God!

*Sunday Evening, August, 1837*

Bright worlds of Nature, and of Thought,  
 It is *no sin* to love you! And blessed,  
 Ever blessed be His name, who *through*  
 The beautiful, *has* led me to the true!  
 The light of youth, of health, of hope, declines;  
 The Star of Bethlehem *never* wanes!

*Sept., 1843.*

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## LETTER XIV.

### NONSENSE--TENNESSEE AND SLAVERY.

*B—e, Tenn., Sept. 10th, 1837.*

MY DEAR C.:

YOUR very welcome epistle was yesterday received by the way of B—e, N. Y., and I do hereby recommend my example, in the direction of letters, for your imitation, until such time, at least, as the Post-Office Department shall have made it necessary for its officials to

understand the contractions in general use for designating the several States of the Union. It is nothing uncommon for me to receive letters "forwarded" from B——e, Pa., to B——e, N. J., and from thence to B——e, Tennessee; and I have just learned that one of mine made a ten months' tour before arriving at its destination. Sorry to say I cannot inform you whether it had made proper improvement by its travels; sorry, also, that your retaliatory measure failed, (partially at least,) of the intended effect, cause and consequence being alike buried in oblivion until you saw fit to turn resurrectionist.

As the "adventure" might have amused you, I regret not having related it all in due time; but now can only say it was something about a handsome Dutchman, who thought it very miraculous that the *tout ensemble* of winter-stage traveling did not demonstrate me to be either an idiot or a shrew. Whereupon the compliment he paid was elegant enough to have emanated from the pen of Washington Irving himself; but alas, and again alas! *it is forgotten*, or it should be written down for the benefit of the "rising generation." Moreover, the said individual happening to hear me say of *whiskers*, (in reply to a lady who called upon me to condemn them *en masse*, out of special compliment to the carrotty ones of her husband,) that "*in general* I thought them rather a bearish appendage," did, in addition to sundry minor items, such as "hand, heart and fortune," actually lay the finest pair man ever wore at my feet!

While the nineteenth century can boast one instance of chivalric devotion like this, it is base slander to say "the Age of Romance is over;" aye, or the Age of Folly either, when "a penniless lass wi' a long pedigree," shall reject a *gentleman* of respectable talents,

good general information, and splendid fortune, simply because he happens to want a classical education. Thank your stars, child, you were not in Tennessee, or your *mittimus* for a lunatic asylum would have been made out long since! However, if Carlton be the successor, *I* shall only say, *he* is one of my prime favorites, whom I should be sorry to see walking in the footsteps of *his* predecessor. My compliments to him always, but tell him I *am* astonished at the want of humanity evinced in his tantalizing questions! "Fair and fat," is, to the best of my knoweldge and belief, the "beau ideal" of Tennessee beauty; so I, being only "fair," stand no better chance here than elsewhere. And ought he not to know, the testifying to a disagreeable fact, is "gall and wormwood" to an unwilling witness? And will it not suffice that one of the Fates spins my thread of the "black worsted," and the other forgets to clip it; but he must needs have assurance of the same under my hand and seal? Oh the times! Oh the manners!

To prevent the repetition of such scandalous impertinence, thus much will I condescend: Should I ever fall away from the ancient and honorable, though unhonored, order of spinsters, I will proclaim my defection immediately. Till then he must be content to know, that if it is my *misfortune* to be single, not my fault, that circumstance should excite compassion, not censure; *if* the latter, I bide the result, there let it rest. A word to you *en passant*, my dearie. Is not the *curiosity* manifest in your formidable list of interrogatories, rather suspicious evidence, that with *you* a certain coming event is casting its "shadow before," present appearances to the contrary notwithstanding? Beware! "Gather May garlands while 'tis May;" but do not "find other hearts

to fling away," if you value the peace of your own. You see I lay my injunctions *ex cathedra* upon you, in return for the unwelcome task imposed upon me; but though reluctant, (as usual,) to do as I am bidden, suppose I may as well execute your commission at once; and should you chance to get rather more than you bargained for, you will be less likely to send another order, I think.

This same obnoxious *I* occurs too often; but what is to be done, being in the singular, one cannot assume the imperial *we*? My blessing on digression, how it helps one along, not with the story though; so *pour commencer*:

East Tennessee is said to be the roughest, most broken, and least civilized portion of the State; but like the Middle, contains, I am told, much romantic and beautiful scenery. The latter includes the Capital and most prominent literary institutions. The District, (between the Tennessee and Mississippi,) is about as picturesque as certain portions of Erie county were at the precise date of "*that rather pleasant trip of ours*" to the Falls. So close indeed is the analogy, that some of the hotels are perfect *fac similes* of the identical Dutch tavern you wot of, in the village without a name. But the resemblance ends here. This vast alluvion is rapidly emerging from its wilderness state, and bearing ample testimony to the enterprise, intelligence, and clear-sighted, liberal-minded policy of those who have sought for themselves, and their children's children, a home and a name in the bosom of a mighty forest.

It is generally the hardy and industrious poor, whose only resources are stout hearts and strong hands, that are seen leading, with praiseworthy zeal, the vanguard of

civilization. Not so here! The unusual number of opulent individuals who have brought their capital, their talents and influence to a new and wide field of exercise, forms a remarkable feature in the history of Tennessee. The children of the earlier settlers must necessarily have wanted many advantages which they are struggling most nobly to secure to their own offspring; and for this reason, I opine, would find small favor in your fastidious eyes, and you as little in theirs, I ween; for, though "love in a cottage" may do very well, yet "Love," without a plantation and plenty of negroes to tend it, would be sorely puzzled to find a resting-place for the sole of his foot in this valley of the Mississippi. "Disinterested affection" is not the guide sane people here charter for Hymen's portals! This is spoken as matter of history, not reproach; for, though in the estimate of woman, ("whose highest ambition is to be loved even as she loves, with uncalculating simplicity and unsuspecting trust,") such a state of things may seem mercenary, sordid, and heartless, in the extreme; still it has its redeeming features—its bright as well as dark side. Where it prevails there are fewer wives and daughters precipitated, by the loss of husbands and fathers, from their stations in life and the enjoyment of all the luxuries which man's pride, if not his affection, ever strives to concentrate around his hearth, into the depths and degradation of poverty, to cope as best they may with all its attendant hardships and humiliations—far fewer than where people are addicted to the folly of falling in love, "they know not why and care not wherefore."

Many of the inhabitants are, for the present, domesticated in log-cabins, and the gentlemen frequently

attired in "homespun;" but you are to recollect—that is, if you desire to form a correct opinion—that they are no more to be compared with those *you* see in a like predicament, than were the courtly barons of olden time, who wrote their names with a "cross of the dagger," to the serfs, their vassals, who resembled them only in this unfortunate particular. Captious people will complain—of course, it is their vocation, and the want of *elegant* society is a prolific theme; but nowhere have I found a race more distinguished for manly bearing and "gentle courtesie" than the "bold hunters of the West." They want, it is true, the high polish of their Atlantic brethren; but, then they excel them in that liberality of sentiment which is a sure guarantee that, at no distant day, they will rank second to none. And, with the single exception of a lurking suspicion that everybody North of the Ohio and Potomac is at least twenty years old at the moment of birth, and an Abolitionist into the bargain, the people of Tennessee, as a community, are less the slaves of sectional jealousy and illiberal prejudice than any other statesmen of my acquaintance. When dressed for scenes of amusement or display, as churches, balls, camp-meetings, etc., they would be apt to incur the epithet, "*Parvenu*," from the staid, Quaker-like, Dutch and Yankee aristocracy; but it is mere difference of custom: the wealth that the one class buries in magnificent saloons, the other invests in the more portable form of jewels and "gorgeous apparel."

The ladies are not as intelligent, in general, as those found in corresponding walks of life in the Northern and middle states, for the obvious reason that they are sent to school late and removed early, and have a per-



fect conviction, while there, that the chances of forming an eligible match (the great object in life,) can in no wise be affected by the improvement made of their time. Still they have acumen enough to discover that, let men *talk* as much as they will of the "charms of intelligence, dignity of manner, modesty, propriety, etc.," the precise modicum of sense which pleases them best whenever they come *to act*, is that which barely enables the possessor to discern, that, weak and ignorant though he *may* be in the abstract, her lord and master is talented and wise in comparison with herself. It is high treason to the majesty of man, I know, to accuse him of a feeling he is ashamed of, and will sometimes disavow in good set terms; but let him declaim, if so he please: it is all moonshine when he has done. The lords of creation do, in their secret souls, believe "a woman is not a reasoning animal," only an amusing pet or useful article of household furniture; and the ladies of Tennessee have the sagacity to accommodate themselves to the real sentiments of those whom they wish to please, and affect childish habits and expressions to secure their object. One of the former most in vogue is the keeping a running accompaniment to everything said, on their watch-chains, finger-rings, and other personal ornaments. I set this down to affectation, because it is not practiced in circles exclusively feminine; and those most addicted to it have been accustomed to the society of gentlemen from the cradle, so it surely cannot arise from diffidence. But let individuals once come to the conclusion that *they* can dispense with these fooleries, or that it is *no concern of theirs* what pleases or displeases the lordly sex, and they will soon vindicate their claims to the noblest of Nature's endowments.

Early marriages are the only ones popular; and a lady fairly convicted, upon her own confession, of remaining single up to the time when most females in higher latitudes leave school, would stand in imminent danger of being condemned to the lonely walks of "single blessedness," or sentenced to the menagerie of some old widower for life. How far these early marriages, by imposing on *children* the exposure and toil incidental to overseers and tailors, may contribute to the short date of human life, for which the climate stands impeached, I shall leave physiologists to determine. Once wives, however, the ladies of the district find little attention paid to Byron's suggestion, "that *married* ladies have the preference in *tete-a-tete* or general conversation;" they are not even allowed the pre-eminence in "dipping," that is, eating snuff from the end of a stick for half an hour at a time, under pretense of cleaning the teeth. If you are still rather benighted as to the *modus operandi*, just imagine a bevy of ladies recently from table, or seated, perhaps, in a carriage, round a bottle of the darling "Scotch," plying their tongues and brushes with equal assiduity, and rivaling the most veteran "*chewer*" in the dispensation of saliva; you will then be pretty well *au fait* to this interesting process. Imitation is the height of flattery, you know, and the noun masculine isn't often squeamish enough to reject it, (in broken doses); but now, instead of being duly propitiated and properly grateful, the gentlemen are perverse enough to make *supernaturally* ugly faces, and insist that "*it's very disgusting.*" It's all sheer spite, I haven't a doubt, and comes from "brooking no 'rival near the throne'" (of the tobacco-worm I mean); but so it is, and I need not add that they—to my

immortal envy of the *toga virilis*—are almost uniformly spared the exhibition. Still the practice is very general, I believe a majority of the young ladies “*tote a box.*”

It is not my intention to claim for the other half of community, exemption from the common frailties of humanity; and it has sometimes occurred to me, that the Tennessee “code of honor” was graduated a little too much on the scale of interest. Or in other words, that there was a want of that stern adherence to Truth, which should characterize the man and the gentleman—of that high-toned moral feeling which makes him regard his word as his bond, and feel *bound by it* as a prisoner to his captor, “*rescue or no rescue.*” It may be, that the fact of having suffered personal inconvenience and pecuniary loss from the exercise of this “Punic Faith,” has enlightened me a little prematurely on the subject; but I think I have set down “naught in malice”—sorry indeed should I be to cast the shadow of a shade, on the good faith of a whole community, because a few individuals in it had betrayed my confidence.

From my earliest infancy have I been taught that, surrounded by crowds, I was to be emphatically *alone*, “among them not of them,” an alien from human sympathy, an exotic in the garden of creation! It was a lone and desolate doom—not spoken in kindness—but it has wrought its own fulfillment; and given me, at the same time, the unenviable faculty of looking on my kind as one might be supposed to do on beings of another species—liable indeed to err from ignorance of his subject; but not likely to examine it through the distorted optics of passion, or prejudice. I have set up a claim to infallibility, you see, it was necessary before entering on a topic discussed only by *soi disant* oracles.

*Pour Monsieur, votre pere, Je me n'etonne pas du mari de sa femme, q'il aurait de la grande sympathie car l'Esclave; mais vous, ma belle cousine,* "are ye gane clean demented," that ye must needs be "speering after" my sentiments on abolition? One might *divine* what they were from my uniform silence I should suppose; but as you make it "convenient to be owre stupid" of late, presume you intend having them stated explicitly for your edification. Much good may it do you; but "no tricks upon travelers if you please"—catch me "*arranging* my ideas" when you know very well I always did confess to the true feminine aversion for everything in the shape of argument. No, indeed, if I have to furnish "stock in trade," you may assort it to suit yourself.

But my honest opinion is, that mankind do love to be imposed upon; and that there are, and always have been, some dear lovers of "the people," who for Public good (and private feud), are ever able and willing to gratify this amiable propensity. Witness: Salem Witchcraft, Billy Morganism, and sundry other popular amusements of the kind. For my own part, I must confess to a most patrician scorn for Mobism and Humbuggerly in all their ramifications. A mob I understand to mean, a mass of factious individuals, whether assembled or not the elements are the same; and it is just as true now as ever it was, that "the greater part know not wherefore they come together." Once in my life, I recollect being infected myself with one of these periodical fever-fits of humanity, denominated the Greek Cause; and how did it terminate? Why the alms, the prayers, and the sympathies of a whole people were enlisted in behalf of the "Cradle of Intellect," to be most basely betrayed.

How, you will not, of course, expect me to recollect any better than A. A., of juvenile pretensions, did, events of the last war, to wit: "*very indistinctly.*" But the consequence was, with me it wrought a perfect cure: the world has overdrawn its credit, now I must have instalments instead of drafts—proofs in place of assertion. And when I hear people speak "great swelling words," about "emancipating the slave," or ameliorating his condition," I desire to know first, if that condition be susceptible of essential improvement; Second, if it really be their intention to effect it; and finally, if the avowed object be attainable by their interference.

Slavery is undoubtedly an evil. It was pronounced as a *curse*, a perpetual curse, upon a certain portion of the human family; but should not Christians pause, before *they* attempt to overturn a system as distinctly recognized in the volume of Inspiration, as the connection between ruler and people, parent and child? Had that system been really displeasing in the eyes of "Him who seeth not as man seeth," why was not the "Father of the Faithful" admonished of his turpitude in this particular; and why did not the Apostle Paul, who was familiar with the rigors of Roman bondage, say to the master—"PIRATICAL RASCAL, *emancipate your slave*"—to the latter, "*cut your master's throat if he refuses to do so,*" instead of preaching kindness and forbearance to the one, diligence and submission to the other? It does appear to me, that a candid man who reads his Bible to *form* an opinion, not to strengthen a preconceived one; will be constrained to admit that Abolition principles must be traced to some other source;—perhaps to the specious sophism that "all men are born free and equal!" Caviling at the first item in the Declaration of Inde-

pendence, is, I know, audacity without precedent, or parallel; nevertheless I shall say it may be a very good philosophical truth; but I am sure it is a moral and political falsehood! "All men born FREE and EQUAL!" Are they indeed? Then why talk of slavery, or why invest one infant with all the appliances of wealth, while another is cast forth in the very moment of birth to nakedness and starvation.

I have allowed slavery to be an evil—perhaps one of the greatest incidental to humanity; still I am not prepared to admit, that it is at all comparable to the unmitigated curse of poverty, which consigns to unremitting servitude hundreds and thousands of the nominal free! I know from actual observation, that one "factotum," or servant of all work at the North, will perform more drudgery than is commonly exacted of three slaves at the South. Yet no sympathy is sought to be excited for these "*oppressed sons and daughters*" of Europe and America! As Byron once said of the poor Irish, "*How unfortunate for them that they did not happen to be born black*"—then, they might hope to come within the pale of a philanthropist's species, I suppose. The slaves of the South are far better off than the white servants of the free States, so far as I can judge, and my opportunities for observation have, as you know, been considerable. They are "*cared for*" in sickness and in health, well fed and clothed, and not worked hard. Indeed I have known many "*daughters of palaces*," of which they were the ornament and pride, actually perform *as much* manual labor as most house servants here are expected to execute. That field-negroes are not heavier tasked in proportion to their strength, may fairly be inferred from the fact, that they can, and often

do, complete their tasks several hours earlier than usual, and then dance half the night after. Not long since I heard a gentleman exclaim, in reference to a certain lady, "LOOK HERE,—does not *she* profess to be a *Christian*," in tones that carried instant conviction *how* incompatible *he* thought her practice and profession.

You will smile when I say the exceptionable practice was, the keeping her servants employed (late in Autumn) two hours "after night," that is "candle light," in the manufacture of their own clothes. Her being at the time on a Red River Plantation where she could not buy, did not excuse her. I wonder how often a Northern master, or mistress would feel any compunction for such a sin? With the *name* of "slave," negroes enjoy more real liberty than most servants styled "Free." They are exempt from *care for the future*—they know that let the world shift round them as it will, *their bread is sure!* They are also free from that canker of the soul, the envy and hopeless repining of a white, cajoled by the cant of republicanism into a belief of his *equality* with those necessity compels him to serve; and found in that anomalous state where the hireling is suspended half way between his employer's station and his own; and only made to feel what that is, at the moment when the knowledge is most galling to his pride, and most mortifying to his feelings.\*

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\*This may be unintelligible to persons not aware that in many parts of the Free States, it is quite common for the native "Helps," (who would be mortally insulted if styled servants), to stipulate, that they "shall be as good as the rest of the family;" that is, admitted to their society, a place at their table, a seat in their pews at church, etc., etc. Necessity frequently extorts a seeming assent, and in extreme cases, lady-visitors and domestics are sometimes introduced; but that "*cere-*

That African slaves are incalculably better off here in bondage, than their progenitors were in the savage freedom of their foreign home, no one can deny who has heard from the lips of a native, a description of the horrible cannibalism and brutal ferocity of these "simple children of nature!" I have often seen an aged woman in L——, who says she never knew what it was to feel "secure of her life for an hour till she came to America—her father, or brothers might have dispatched her at any time." And I am at this moment in the house of a lady, whose mother rescued an infant of her own from being *roasted alive* to pamper the morbid appetites of a fresh gang of Guinea men. An unusual chattering in one of the negro cabins arrested her attention, and stepping to the door she *saw the embers already prepared* to receive the unconscious child, now firmly grasped in the arms of one, who, more intelligent than the rest, had observed the value "*white people*" set upon their children, and resisted all their threats and promises, exclaiming "*Mistress Picaninny! MISTRESS PICANINNY!*" He afterward said that in *his country* it was nothing uncommon for *a father* to take his child *from the mother's arms*, bury it in the warm ashes and set his foot or war club on it till its struggles were over. And the gang, I am told, were more *astonished* at the *unreasonable* and *unheard of* opposition they had met, than enraged at their disappointment. What, not allow them a Picaninny to roast when tired of other food? Absurd! what *else* were they good for? There is Arcadian life for you.

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*mony*" is very apt to be "forgotten" — *omitted*—and, as might be expected, the obnoxious conditions are almost uniformly evaded in presence of company.



But you will ask, why slaves ever plot against or abandon their masters, if, on the whole they are comfortable or contented? I answer, because they, like other people, do not always feel content to "let '*well enough*' alone"—for the same reason that mankind are always sighing after an unattained and unattainable something beyond their reach. It is because "the uneradicable taint of sin" has spread its foul contamination, wide and deep, over a whole moral universe. "Aye, but has not the whip some agency in the matter," you exclaim. "We do not inflict corporal punishment on our *free* servants"—I beg your pardon, "*helps*"—*grown ones*, you mean—and true you do not, *because* you have it in your power to turn them from your doors when idle or refractory, to send them to the police if dishonest; the case is no longer parallel, take something else which is correlative, as for instance, the minority of children, apprentice indentures, state's prison regulations, naval and military discipline; and what do their annals proclaim? Why, that when one human being comes in possession of another, "to have and to hold," "for better for worse"—*peaceable if possible, forcible if necessary*, is the motto upon which mankind, in all countries and all ages, have universally been constrained to act. If there is a better, I should like to see it exemplified.

But why do I reply? Let the tale of the English sailor on Lake Erie answer. From such ruthless barbarity the strong arm of law protects the American slave, though the free-born Briton perish in its fangs; and the much stronger one of public opinion brands with indelible infamy the master who is cruel to his slave. The mark of Cain is upon him; let him go where he will, his reputation haunts him like a shadow;

he is set down for a dangerous neighbor, an unkind husband, an unnatural father, a monster in the shape of a man. This correct moral feeling must inevitably exert a powerful sway over the passions of a people, nervously, I had almost said ridiculously, sensitive on the score of reputation. And that I have read the feeling of the South on this point correctly, witness the sudden and stern retribution that fell on the mistress of the "female slave in New Orleans," whose case the Misses Grimke so triumphantly quote, to prove that such scenes *are* frequently enacted in families, though the guest knows it not. A lady may conceal her domestic mismanagement from a morning visitor, but will not an intimate acquaintance detect it in the course of a week, think you? Visits at the South are not limited to hours, and your Southron is not the man to go about with a smiling brow, "nursing his wrath to keep it warm," much less to perpetrate an act of cold-blooded ferocity.

Having alluded to the Misses Grimke, who I suppose are still "exhibiting" at the North, I will add, that they are ~~the~~ daughters of Judge, and sisters of the late Hon. Thos. S. Grimke, of Charleston, S. C., of course from the first circles of society, and I am told, "*very intelligent.*" But while I respect their "undoubted good intentions," I cannot but surmise, that the fact of their being still "*the Misses Grimke*" (though old enough, it seems, to manage their own affairs their own way,) has something with their faith and practice. Energetic minds, my dear C.—and some such there are even in woman's fragile form—*must have* scope for action, and if it be not found in the hallowed home of affection, it will be sought elsewhere, it may chance to be in the surveillance of their neighbor's affairs, politics, speech-

making, "pill-taking, or the like innocent amusements." Perhaps they may learn in their travels, that people must take the world as they find it, not as they fancy they would like to make it, and that while wealth confers power, poverty must yield submission. But the respect so freely accorded to *their* integrity of purpose I cannot extend to their coadjutors. Some may have commenced impostors and ended dupes; a very few who are neither fanatics nor fools may still rank among them; but the majority, I fear, act upon the Demetrius principle—"Sirs, know ye not that by this *craft* we have our wealth?" If "proofs" to the contrary are extant, what and where are they? As yet I see nothing more than the petty punctuality of an adroit swindler, bent on defrauding you to a large amount. Of course you will understand it is of the leaders I speak; but who are they, pray? It seems not even infamy can drag them from obscurity.

Before entering upon the last "count in the indictment," it is necessary to advert, (slightly as possible,) to another grave charge very seriously brought against slavery by advocates of emancipation, namely, that "it encourages licentiousness." This is a bad subject for a lady's pen, and were it not that omission might be construed admission, most gladly would I pass it over altogether. But having observed for several years, that nearly all "runaways" were described as "yellow," or "bright"—that is, with a cross of the white blood more or less remote—I suppose there must be some grounds for the allegation. Still if certain infamous statistics—I mean exactly what I say, *infamous statistics*, not merely statistics of infamy—published a few years since in some of the northern cities, contained *one truth* to ten falsehoods, the reproach does not come with a good

grace from that quarter—they are not entitled to “cast the first stone.” And I put it to any man of common sense and common honesty, to say, if in his opinion, the evil would be like to be obviated, by bringing superiors and inferiors of the same race and color into the frequent and familiar contact and association which must inevitably ensue wherever negro slavery is abolished? If so, where is that High Priest of “Moral Reform,” Rev. Mr. M’Dowal, the arch panderer, with all his virtuous furor? “Othello’s occupation’s gone,” though, now I come to think of it, I believe he and his journal were both suppressed long ago as a public nuisance. If they were not they ought to have been, for never was a more pestilent device for running all decency out of existence in an ill-judged crusade against vice. However, peace to his ashes, if he has made his apotheosis; though, I fear, if one were to examine too nicely, his mantle might be found to have fallen on some shoulders where it sits quite as ungracefully as it would on any this side 37° 38’ north. I do not mean to assert, that no such thing as illicit intercourse ever exists between master and slave, for if the cause require a single falsehood or misrepresentation in its defense, it shall be abandoned at once to those more expert than myself in the use of such weapons, if there be any truth in the old adage, that “practice makes perfect.” Better to worship truth always at the bottom of the well; than see her elevated to the surface only to become the foot-ball of every intellectual gladiator. But I do very sincerely believe such conduct to be far less frequent than you of the north suppose; not quite so common, at least, as to reconcile a Southern community to the idea of Amalgamation.

“*Disruption of family ties*” might be urged with

far greater propriety, for, indeed, this is no small evil; though, fortunately, mutual pride and affection, as well as religion and humanity, are continually rising up more and more for its suppression. I dare say, the idea of "*mutual affection*" is all "*heathen Greek*" to you; but only turn to old Scottish history or romance, and see the devotion of clansman to chief—the pertinacity with which laird and foster-brother *just will* wink at each other's enormities—and you will have a much clearer conception of the case. It's a pity the really honest and humane wouldn't, instead of looking only at the side of the shield their own hands have painted, take time to observe how often the *freed* slaves of New York are driven back, as pests and nuisances, naked and destitute, to the shelter of their old homes, by those who have no knowledge of, and no forbearance with, the real ingrain negro nature. Probably they never dream of one man's offering "two prices" for another's slave, or taking half the value for his own, rather than part man and wife, and another's saying, "*Choose your master,*" (which means that a hundred or so, more or less, isn't to stand in the way of such choice), and a third, virtually "throwing in a child or two," to avoid separating young ones from their mother, or of servants, put up at public sale or hire, saying, "*I shan't serve you, sir,*" an intimation which few venture to disregard at the risk of being "bedeviled out of time, money, and patience into the bargain;" but I think they would be apt to get pretty much out of conceit of themselves, or disgusted with the objects of their commiseration, could they only hear the universal cry of horror—*Oh, Mass'r, they is so hard to please!*"—with which the poor creatures invariably recoil from living a single

year with any of these self-same sympathizers that happen to settle among them. "*Take you down the river to some of them Frenchmen or Yankees in New Orleans,*" is about the *ne plus ultra* of threats to an idle or vicious servant; and "*thankless as a Southern slave to a Northern Abolitionist,*" as good an illustration of ingratitude as any mortal, *au fait* to slavery as it is, would ever need: for while the master regards said Abolitionist as a sort of rabid animal, whom it is perfectly right and necessary to hunt down, the slave unquestionably *despises him*, from the very bottom of his soul, as neither more nor less than one of those wretched Pariahs so immeasurably inferior to all "spectable colored ladies and gemmen," that there is almost contamination in the very name! But you should hear a negro say, "*Poor white folks!*" if you want to know how completely the vocabulary opprobrious, the air contumelious, and the intendment infamous, can be exhausted in a single breath.

Yet, after all, the fact still remains—*families are separated*, and sometimes, perhaps, (though very rarely, I believe), capriciously; and could this result be traced primarily or exclusively to slavery, it would of itself be an unanswerable argument against the institution. But if this is to be abolished in mercy to "the poor, injured African," what, or who, is to stand between him and that stern master of the free, "the unspiritual god, Circumstance;" and what is to be done with *his* minion, Common Law: for who has not seen the household of the Caucasian scattered, like leaves before the autumn blast, at the very shadow of his coming?

These and the like considerations prove, most conclusively to me, that Abolition is not a question of religion

or morality, or humanity even! What is it, then? Simply a political hobby. And now, according to my own showing, I am about to give irrefragable evidence that Celibacy has marked me for her own! Well, so it is; but let that pass. "A woman meddling with politics is like a one-eyed dog in a meat-shop," says some elegant writer; but not having his fear before my eyes, I shall venture—consoling myself, meantime, with a reflection which, it seems, never occurred to him, namely, that a dog with no eyes has still *two* senses by which to distinguish fresh meat from stale.

To satisfy yourself that my position is correct, mark the persevering, uniform effort to bring this same anti-slavery question to bear upon elections, and the use made of it in the Congressional halls of the country. Did you never see the mother of an unruly urchin keep a venerable birch suspended over her mantle-piece, to be hinted at, specially referred to, and even taken down and brandished *about* the ears of the refractory subject, as occasion might require? Well, just such another rod of correction is this slave question in the hands of a politician. No sooner is an obnoxious measure in danger of being carried, than up starts some one with "*slave representation*;" another chimes in "*equal rights*;" a third follows up the cry with "*JURISDICTION OF THE GENERAL GOVERNMENT*;" and Mr. Adams shall "*ask leave to present a petition*," and Mr. Van Buren have his "*doubts*," till the house is distracted, the members in a frenzy, and the original subject, for the time being, a forgotten dream to all but the makers of the uproar. And this is LEGISLATION!

By-the-by, has your father forgiven the last-named gentleman his success, in consideration of his "doubts

respecting the District of Columbia?" Aye, he *doubts*, does he? So do not I, that, let him flourish the old birch as much as he will, the time to *use* it will never come in his day, if he can prevent it. *He* has no ambition to "damn himself to everlasting fame" as the dismemberer of the Union: in the very characteristics of the man the country has the best of all possible assurances that the emergency is not yet. Should it ever come at all, he knows very well there is no alternative but war—"war to the knife"—yes, to the hilt! He knows the South will *never* succumb to this foreign domination; that it cannot—it ought not. He knows every son of the soil would pour out his life-blood like water, and repel such an aggression on his rights to the last gasp of existence! And there is not a demagogue of the North who talks, "like a sick man in his dreams," of "*coercing* the South into measures," but knows, too, in his inmost soul, that he "would cavil with the devil for the ninth part of a hair," were he similarly situated.

Daughter of America! what dost thou here in this field of unhallowed strife? Is it to stand, like the Sabine wife, between your country and destruction; or, like the Scripture's madman, "to scatter around fire-brands, arrows and death!" BEWARE! The fiery mass of human passion, once ignited, will bury in undistinguished ruin all that is "lovely and of good report" in public character, all that is estimable and dear in private life, and leave their burning ashes on the soul! And shall woman's breath fan the flame of civil discord, and woman's hand whet the dagger that is to drink the warm blood of a brother? Forbid it, GENIUS OF MY COUNTRY!

Do not do me the injustice to suppose I have forgotten



for a moment that I was once a child of the North. No, New York contains the ashes of my father, to me it is consecrated ground. It was the birthplace of my brother, and every spot whereon he trod is *holy*, and I love it as those only can who have little else to cling to but their country. Her lofty highlands and lowly glens, her mighty lakes and noble rivers, and rushing cataracts, have all their place in my affections. I am proud of her noble motto EXCELSIOR, of her unrivaled civil, religious, and literary institutions; above all, I love her for her good old aristocracy—pillars on which the vast fabric of social rights must rest. But while I thus look to her with exultation and pride, it is with indignation and shame I behold the moral scavengers of the old world, pouring wave after wave of human corruption through all the portals of that fair edifice, till every avenue is filled to the gorge with the foul pollution. It is as if the Temple of Cloacis had crushed the Parthenon!

New York suffers for a fault not her own; she has been cheated of her identity by an impudent impostor, who goes swaggering up and down in her cast-clothes, and caricatures her to her face. But shall the country, by its naturalization laws, connive at this innovation on her domestic quiet, and then complain that her family is not well regulated, and that she herself “plays most fantastic tricks before high heaven?” It is a wonder she has not gone frantic before now; but the day is not far distant, I hope, when her majestic voice shall be heard, hushing into silence the babbling crew, who have so long usurped her honors and dishonored her name, at once and forever.

The above, my dear C., is written exclusively for your

benefit, not to enable anything or anybody that ever chanced to meet me in the streets, to talk herself into a blue-stocking oracle *pro tem.*, on the strength of having "seen a letter from *an acquaintance* at the South." You know who will translate for you, and he and one or two others are welcome to the perusal if their courage does not fail them "upon sight;" but no more. I have contemned the majesty of mob, and set at naught the dignity of *canaille*, and even were it not so, I am not conceited enough to expect my opinion to have any weight with abolitionists, who are well known to be *ex officio*, as impervious to argument as India-rubber to water. So as no good can come of the exposal, if this is circulated as my Letters from Virginia were, it will be without my consent; "I would rather print before I publish," as a certain clergyman used to say of his sermons.

*Adieu ma chere Cousine.*

L.

### REMINISCENCE.

"HE who sits above  
 In his calm glory, will forgive the love  
 His creatures bear each other, even though blent  
 With a vain worship; for its close is dim  
 Even in tears, which lead the wrong soul back to him."

WE were but Two. Early unkindness drew  
 Its line of hated demarcation round  
 Our childhood's hearth, shutting us coldly out  
 From kindred sympathies. We were but Two;  
 Each was to each the other's world—for us  
 There was no other. He whose sunny smile,  
 Illumed life's early dawn, might never more

Dispense that cheering light to guide us through  
 Its wanderings! And she, who should have held  
 Unto the parched and fevered lip, the cup  
 Of living waters, pure from the fount  
 Of woman's holy love—why she, aye *she*  
 Had given e'en thee, thou sinless one,  
 To Death's embrace, "*most cheerfully*, so it  
 Had pleased God!"

There was another then,  
 To walk with me life's "peopled desert!"  
 Such destiny I knew was mine. Full oft  
 I had been warned by sneering lip, and eye  
 Flashing in anger and in scorn; and by  
 A thrilling tenderness of look and tone,  
 Whose melancholy sweetness haunts me yet,  
 That *I* was born for this. I knew it well,  
 E'en in that hour of tearless agony,  
 When *first* returning reason vainly strove  
 To put away the fearful consciousness,  
 Of what mistaken kindness had concealed.

*It was not well*; they should have told me *I*  
 Was fatherless! That the radiant eye,  
 Which ever turned with mellowed light to mine,  
 Had closed on earth to ope in heaven.  
 They *should have told me* that the smile so like  
 To moonlight upon mist, or as the rays  
 Of setting sunbeams on a ruined fane,  
 Holy, and bright, and glorious, yet sad,  
 Was now a gem for memory's casket  
 Only! They should have told all this, ere I  
 Was strong to suffer and endure; and then,  
 Perhaps, I had not vainly yearned to feel

The cold, damp grave-clods, pressing heavy down  
 Upon my throbbing heart, so they would lay  
 Me by his side—e'en in the grave to seek  
 Companionship denied on earth. But Death,  
 (Grown dainty,) battens not on refuse food;  
 And therefore the unloved lived on—the dead  
 Mocking the living—a bed of lava  
 In its own crater frozen! Such I knew  
 Must be *my* life's brief history, not thine.  
 Oh not for thee, thou young and guileless one,  
 Were dark forebodings of untimely blight,  
 And early death! I had not dreamed of this  
 For thee.

Oh it is little, that the brief  
*Vain* struggle with despair, should shed the frosts  
 Of age upon the brow of youth; pouring  
 Contempt on manhood's pride; but it is much,  
 When stern oppression flings his ruthless grasp  
 Upon the slumb'ring passions of a child,  
 Scarce conscious of their name, and gifts them with  
 A giant strength to war with fate! Then girds  
 The mail of conflict on *thy* shrinking heart,  
 Oh woman! saying to such as thee,  
 Go forth, and match with power, and cope with guile,  
 And battle to the death in passion's warfare!  
 Woe for thy budding hopes and young affections!  
 They are ever first and noblest victims  
 In the strife. And woman's gentle nature,  
 Her happy, *trusting spirit*, they, oh *they*,  
 Are traitors and must die the death.

I do  
 Remember me of such an hour; madly

Through all the depths of outraged nature,  
Its very elements were nerved for strife,  
And from the mingled voice of agony,  
And love, and pride, there came a vow not heard  
On earth, but known in heaven, ever to guard  
And shield thee with the might of strong affection,  
So that no burning blight should lay its seal  
Of withering on *thy* youthful heart, bowing  
Its lofty aspirations down.

Then, too,  
There came the stern resolve; no Christian grace,  
Nor woman-weakness, nor love of God, nor man,  
Nor hope in life, nor fear of death, should win  
Me from my haughty purpose, ere I saw  
That spurner of the infant boy, bowed low  
Before the honored man, and scorn for scorn  
Returned the saintly scorner! And well  
That vow was kept, till Death, the officious  
And unwelcome, interposed to cancel all.

SHE, whose joy it was to make the fountains  
Of young life o'erflow in bitterness, HE,  
Whose pride had been to cast the healing salt  
Into the troubled tide—Death, death, *these*  
Are thy chosen!

Wherefore, oh God, so sternly  
Hast thou tried thy creature? I could forego  
The paltry triumph over pride abased,  
I *might* have spared the winner from the race  
Before the goal was won; but not, oh not  
From out my inmost soul thy priceless love,  
My more than brother! I was believing

Hoping, *trusting* all for thee; but dreaming  
 Never once, that Death's stern hand was feeling  
 For thy heart-strings, and mine not yet grown cold.

Men *talk* of disappointment, when they mourn  
 Some little germ of promise blighted, ere  
 The touch of hope's creative hand had formed  
 And fashioned it to beauty! When the tree,  
 The stately tree, whose stem was sown in hope  
 And nursed in fear, until the heart's best blood  
 Would flow like water out to yield its root  
 One drop of moisture—when *this* is stricken down,  
 Before the very eyes that looked to it  
 For shelter from life's wintry storms, and suns  
 Of sultry summer—eyes that had grown dim  
 Watching its growth and watering it with tears;  
 Then, *then* 'tis felt!

All, all is over now;

And that which *was* an adamant, and braved  
 The fury of the elements in strife,  
 Is now the veriest reed that floats upon  
 The tide of time, unknowing where to anchor.  
 God grant it may be on the "Rock of Ages."  
 —, *Dec.*, 1837.

#### TO THE LOVED IN HEAVEN.

TWELVE weary years, twelve weary years,  
 I've lingered on since thou wert gone;  
 Pygmalion's statue, bathed in tears,  
 To mourn the breathing spirit flown.

And yet I would not have thee back,  
 To tread with me life's thorny way;

My heart's best blood is on its track,  
Oh God! I would I were away!

Away from sin, away from strife,  
Away from doubt, away from fear,  
Away from all that makes this life  
A stifled sigh, a falling tear.

I would not have thee back to grieve,  
O'er blighted hope and baffled fame;  
I would not have thy heart to weave,  
Of burning thought, its pall of flame.

But I would blend thy dust with mine,  
When in the grave I rest my head;  
Earth *has* no love for me like thine,  
I would I too were with the dead.

*Lauderdale, Tenn., June 10th, 1848.*

#### FOURTH OF JULY ADDRESS TO THE SONS OF TEMPERANCE.

*Prepared for a young lady to deliver, with BIBLE and  
BANNER to a newly organized DIVISION.*

(INSERTED BY REQUEST.)

REV. SIR AND WORTHY BROTHER:

As the honored agent of your humble auxiliaries, allow me to express to yourselves and the Sons of Temperance in this town and vicinity, their high estimate of your incalculable services in a field where the immortal seeds of Faith, and Hope, and Love are sown in time, to blossom and expand for all eternity!

But while millions are congregated to celebrate this anniversary of a nation's birth, let *us* remember, that

there are more potent enemies of human weal than foreign domination or political vassalage; and *not forget* in the peans due to the past the untiring vigilance demanded for the future. The edicts of civil despotism may reach life and property, its chains chafe and gall the athletic form and sinewy limb; but what are *they* to the "iron gyves" that *eat into the soul*, the fierce sirocco that scorches and withers up the brain, the cold palsy that paralyzes the will, the fell grasp that crushes out the very life of life from every phase of existence? The regal or military despot may *sometimes* require a victim; war here and there claim his holocaust. "*But who slew all these?*" ALL THESE, whose bones bleach and moulder from the shores of the Atlantic to the strand of the Pacific?

Who reduced that strong man to the helplessness of infancy—who sent that venerable father, that soul-stricken mother, transfixed on many a spear from the broken staff of their old age, down mourning to the grave? Who betrayed those silver hairs to the dust, and soiled the glory of their crown with the mire of the street? Who bathed the face of that proud boy in scalding tears for a father's shame, and sent that promising young man to the scaffold, that stalwart form to the felon's cell? Who dragged that minister of the Most High God from the very "horns of the altar," to wallow in the filth of his own degradation? Who planted that moral Upas to distil its deadly miasma over all who repose in its shade, till the very breath of heaven—"God's blessing breathed upon a fainting earth"—is redolent and reeking with the foul effluvia of the bottomless pit? Who wrested that last crust from the famishing daughter of affluence, and forced her to the



gate of the alms-house, or the grave of the suicide? Who launched that young girl—despair at her heart, a father's curse ringing in her ears, and a father's dishonor clinging to her name—into that vortex where health, and innocence, and peace, and all are lost? Who forced that frantic woman to fly from the husband of her youth, and chained *that* living, breathing, sentient being to the foul and loathsome carcass of a soulless, senseless brute? Who baptized that child in its mother's gore, and laid the wretched parent in a bloody grave by a husband's hand? Who turned that other home into a pandemonium, whose frenzied inmates would gladly choose "strangling and death rather than life?" Who transformed that once gentle, loving wife into an incarnate fiend—who made her a foul plague-spot in creation, a burning stigma on her sex and race, over which angels well might weep? At whose bidding does "Love" thus "laugh at faith," man's honor and woman's peace, all promise of distinction, all sense of security, all dream of happiness here and hereafter, flit away like the shadow of a shade? who *is it* that thus chases reason, and penitence, and pardon, and hope, and faith, from the couch of the dying, while the poor conscious-stricken maniac is already raving in the agonies of the "second death?"

Ah, they vanish, "like the baseless fabric of a vision," before the breath of that "pestilence that walketh in darkness and wasteth at noonday," and the iron nerve, and herculean frame, and giant intellect, bow down *almost without a struggle*: and the "worm of the still" winds coil after coil of his serpentine fold around the unresisting victim, till thought, and life, and all, are strangled in his deadly embrace! And is there no

hand outstretched to save—no bulwark for defense—*no* shout “TO THE RESCUE?” Oh, yes! they are coming—*aye coming*—from every valley and hill-top in our land, weak and impotent it may be in their own individual strength, but mighty as the overwhelming avalanche in the resistless momentum of concentrated power; and thank God, there is hope at last, that the progress of King Alcohol may yet be stayed!

It is because the noble “Sons,” whom you this day represent, have enrolled their names in this band of moral heroes, that we, your few and feeble allies, would give to our admiration and gratitude a more enduring expression, than the trembling sounds which now vibrate on the air, in their passage to oblivion. And, therefore, we turn with one accord, not to diamond or opal, but to that “pearl of exceeding price, whose beauty shall not decay,” for it concentrates and refracts the rays of Divinity, to irradiate the wide circle of humanity.

To you, Reverend Sir, the professed expositor of this Sacred Volume, I need not expatiate on its noble simplicity and touching pathos, its unrivaled beauty and matchless sublimity; its lofty morality, practical precepts, and ultimate bearing on man’s character and destiny. Compared with its luminous and simple ethics, how dark and complicate appear the most lucid dogmas of the ablest human casuist. As a science nothing can be more abstruse— as a rule of practice nothing more clear and concise. It bears the impress of Divinity—man did not make, he cannot destroy—and when a God condescends to teach, should not all nature draw near, with humble reverence, and listen? From his “golden rule,” we learn “to raise up the bowed down,” to “bind up the broken in heart and bruised in spirit,” to sustain the weak, defend the

defenseless, RECLAIM THE ERRING, and "*prevent the foot that is ready to slide.*" But what avails it to understand the injunction unless we reduce it to practice? "If ye know these things," says our blessed Saviour, "happy are ye if ye do them."

The voice of all nature proclaims to man—"This, *this* is not thy rest; "*passing away*" is written on all that life or earth contains; yet how *many* choose to merge the nobler in the baser instincts of their nature, and turn their backs upon their Maker and the Most-High God, their Redeemer! Alas! *alas!* that man, "the worm, the god," should so prefer the reptile to the Divinity of his nature, forgetting alike his high origin and immortal destiny! But it is even so: and here, then, is ample room for us to approve ourselves sons and daughters of God as well as of Temperance; for here is a field wide as the area of humanity—labor momentous as the interests of eternity.

Let the infidel scoff, and the orthodox opposer range himself in open hostility to all benevolent association; let the lukewarm friend virtually throw *his* influence into the adverse scale; but *we* must not falter! We have put *our* hands to the work; "and our earnest *must not* slacken into play!" We have joined *ourselves* to the battle; and *he* that would turn back from the fury of the onset, "*is* as when a standard-bearer fainteth!" For us—for you particularly, young man—there is *no looking back!* The lip that predicts your failure, the voice that would lure you from your post, would be first and foremost to sneer at your weakness and deride your desertion. The very eye that now smiles in seeming contempt or indifference on your organization, might, perhaps, mourn in secrecy and

tears over its dissolution! Go on, then—in the name of all that is sacred to man, all that is dear to woman, GO ON! “Scorn not the smallness of daily endeavor; let the *great meaning* ennoble it ever!”

Take, then, this priceless legacy to a ruined world—this chart, drawn by the finger of Omnipotence, to guide man; by Calvary’s Cross, to the throne of the Most High. Bind it to your bosoms, till the spirit of its precepts has passed into your hearts and lives again in your lives!

Take, too, this fair banner; turn your eye to its silken sheen: let FIDELITY be your crest; LOVE and PURITY your “sword and shield;” FAITH your talisman; HOPE your watchword; “*upward and onward*” your career. Faint not, falter not, till man recognizes *man* as his brother, and stands up once more in the image of his Maker—“regenerated, redeemed, disenthralled!”

“Men of thought, be up and stirring,  
Night and day;  
Sow the seed—withdraw the curtain—  
Clear the way!  
Men of action, aid and cheer them  
As ye may.

“Once the welcome light has broken,  
Who shall say  
What the unimagined glories  
Of the day?  
What the evil that shall perish  
In its ray?  
*Men of thought and men of action,*  
CLEAR THE WAY!”

Fling your proud colors to the breeze!—and now, in the name of the God of Battles, go forth, “conquering and to conquer!” “Not for the brightness of a mortal wreath”—not for the idle bravuras, the empty applause

of a transitory crowd—O no! they would be insult and mockery in an hour like this—but for the sublime assurance that “He which converteth a sinner from the error of his ways shall save his soul from death.” “They that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they who turn many to righteousness, as the stars, forever and ever!” L.

## MIDNIGHT MUSINGS.

My fate is dark—my spirit high;  
 No voice of love thrills on my ear;  
 No smile of hope relumes my eye:  
 My soul is sad—my heart is sere.

Friend after friend, I've seen them die,  
 Or *felt* them change: dream after dream,  
 I've watched their flight, all wild and high—  
 Their fall, in cold oblivion's stream.

And Fancy folds her weary wings,  
 And Genius checks his eagle flight;  
 A haunting gleam of shapeless things  
 Is *all* of Thought's once gorgeous light.

What is my love? A worthless boon  
 Back on the giver coldly thrust.  
 What is my life? A hollow moan.  
 My requiem? “Dust to dust!”

What have we left, my soul; to seek?  
 The smile of love, the voice of praise,  
 When beauty wanes, is cold and mute  
 As are thy lute's forgotten lays.

What have we left! O naught on earth:  
 The minstrel-eye, whose radiance flung  
 A glory o'er the inner life,  
 "Eye hath not seen," nor poet sung:

The minstrel-voice, whose echo stirred  
 Within my heart a dream of song;  
 Earth hath not seen, time hath not heard  
 A strain so wild, so sweet, so long:

The spirit-wing, whose dazzling flight  
 Spanned earth and heaven, and skies and seas,  
 The spirit-crown, whose magic light  
 Flung glory on the passing breeze:

The spirit's MIGHT, that high o'er all  
 In regal splendor bore its sway;  
 The spirit's LOVE, that knew no pall—  
 O God! that *these* should pass away!

The rest, the rest! not theirs to cry  
 The craven note, *we fail! we fail!*  
 A broken plume, a shrouded eye,  
 A trampled leaf—these tell the tale.

"Soiled with the dust of men," that wing,  
 That angel wing in darkness lies:  
 A naked thorn, a nameless grief,  
 Is all of Genius' cherished prize.

Alas! thou wing, thou weary wing,  
 Thou crown of glory and of pride,  
 Earth may not heed, poor fainting thing,  
 The life-drop ebbing from thy side.

Earth may not know from what a height  
 That bird of song was stricken down ;  
 Earth may not know the gems thou'st lost,  
 Bright Genius, from thy starry crown.

Alas, for thee, thou weary wing!  
 The coil is round thee all too fast ;  
 Too close to earth thy pinions cling ;  
 A trance-like death hath o'er thee past!

O wing, O angel wing, arise,  
 And plume thee for a prouder flight !  
 In vain, in vain—the filmy eyes  
 Are closing in eternal night.

Woe for thee, wing, O wayworn wing,  
 Gone is thy splendor and thy pride ;  
 God help thee now, forsaken thing,  
 Not thus, not thus thou shouldst have died !

God of all life! to thee we bring  
 The ashes from a funeral pyre!

\* \* \* \* \*

“God of all life! to thee I string  
 The chords of my neglected lyre!”

The rushing of that spirit-wing,  
 How sweeps it now heaven's arch along,  
 Its clarion note all high and clear—  
 “SALVATION” is my loftiest song!

Life, joy, and hope, and all in all,  
 My Savior, God, in thee I find ;  
 Back to the earth I cast its thrall—  
 Ye may not stay the chainless mind.

Hinder me not, frail child of day,  
 My course is high, my pinion fleet—  
 Hinder me not! Away, away,  
 I'll lay my song at JESUS' feet!"

Ark., Dec. 31, 1849.

### FRAGMENT.

"O Love! thy altar is on high,  
 Though burns its flame within the heart."

SUTERMEISTER.

It is! it is! The voiceless grave  
 Gives back the yearning soul no sound or tone:  
 Earth's harps have no deep melody that thrills  
 Through the lone chambers of the haunted heart,  
 The song that heralds bliss immortal!  
 Thy home, O Love! *must be* in heaven!           L.

"FAIL!" FAIL!—IT DARE NOT THINK TO FAIL.

*Reply to the exclamation, "It's a wonder your EYE  
 doesn't fail, with such bad health and little care!"*

"Fail!" *fail!* It dare not think to fail—  
 Minerva stalking by its side,  
 And Pleasure sighing o'er the vale  
 For fairer hours to her denied.

"Fail!" *fail*—ambition at the heart,  
 Burning its liquid orb to coal;  
 While Health and Care still stand apart,  
 With wistful eye on far-off goal!



“Fail!” fail—when golden Hope hath poured  
 Her molten splendors on its hall,  
 And wary Time hath grasped the hoard  
 To hide it 'neath his fun'ral pall!

‘Fail!’ *fail*—*how* could it fail, when Life  
 Transfixed each glance upon a thorn,  
 And sneering Envy marked the strife  
 Fate waged with Pride, the better born?

Why should it fail? Despair hath froze  
 Its glacier light forever there,  
 And Passion's Etna wildly throws  
 Its lurid light upon the air.

I've welded it in passion's heat;  
 I've cooled it with indiff'rence's frost;  
 I've laved it oft in feeling's tide:  
 Why should its splendor now be lost?

“Fail!” fail! They *rest* who “fail;”  
 But it still struggles with the wave;  
 It dare not reef its elfish sail,  
 It may not rest but in the grave!

*De Soto, March, 1850.*

## LETTER XV.

ON THE DEATH OF A YOUNG LADY,

*Killed by the accidental explosion of a rocket.*

TO MISS F. F. F.

S——, La., Aug., 1850.

MY RESPECTED FRIEND:

Though I know how hard it is to meet the cold hand of a stranger in place of the dear, familiar trace we love, still hope to be excused for assuming an office which neither Mrs. L. nor her daughter are at present able to fill. Both have been ill since their partial recovery from the terrible shock of their recent and sore affliction: the former dangerously so, from an attack of inflammatory rheumatism. She is now convalescent, but too enfeebled in health and depressed in spirit to assume the correspondence of her deceased daughter, in addition to the numerous and arduous duties which *she* discharged so entirely to the satisfaction of all, but the few who regretted to see her valuable life worn out in an ungenial avocation. You will, therefore, excuse me, if, in relating "*every minutia*" of the late sad occurrence, I repeat some things of which you are already apprised, and many which will be painful to hear.

You ask "*why*, if there was but the one wound, was her dress so much torn?" I can only say, that, being of a light fabric, it might, very possibly, have been done in the fall; at all events, I know that it was torn from her body when all was over. But, save the one fatal mark, that fiery messenger most assuredly left no trace, except a small contusion on the right side of her nose, another near the corner of her mouth, and a slight

ciatrice on the neck of a little miss of twelve or thirteen, whose head your departed friend had just bent down on her own lap, telling her "not to be afraid!" And was it not a beautiful and fitting finale to such a life as hers, that her last accents should have been of kindness—her *last act* one of mercy, that, in all human probability, spared another from sharing her fate?

You have certainly "the last letter," and, so far as we know, "the last line," she ever wrote. I spent most of the day with her on Saturday; consequently, she must have written in the evening after I left; and her sister recollects to have seen her seal and direct on Monday morning. She then completed a small piece of fancy-work, and spent some little time in arranging a private sitting-room and other matters in reference to the expected arrival of Mr. P——; but declined entering on any more material occupation of her own, in order to devote the week to the assistance of a young friend in her bridal preparations.

After this, she held with her beloved pastor a long and highly satisfactory conversation on the subject of experimental religion, and cheered his desponding heart by saying how peculiarly and singularly appropriate to her own feelings were certain portions of a service, over the apparent inutility of which he was mourning. In the evening, and for the first time in several weeks, she went out to make calls, accompanied by some young married ladies, whom, in her own quiet, unobtrusive manner, she incited to faith and good works; continued more than ordinarily well and cheerful throughout the day, and while at supper, concluded "to go," as usual, "on 'Nette's account,'" to the pyrotechnic exhibition, held a few squares distant. She was attended by her

esteemed friend, Dr. M——r, a young gentleman whose amiable character and deep sympathy have since endeared him more than ever to her afflicted relatives; and left in what were for her “unusually fine spirits,” remarking gayly to her companion, “Let us old folks go ahead, and put these *children* (her sister and a married lady still younger,) behind us, where we can take care of them;” and when the tramp of approaching footsteps was heard an hour or two later, her mother thought the whole party were returning “*in high glee!*”

Having been suffering, for some ten or twelve hours previous, with a severe chill and fever, I was, of course, not present; but understand that “Miss Celia (for that is the name by which *we* knew and loved her best,) took, either from choice or necessity, one of the high back seats,” at the extreme verge of the inclosure, near the family of Mrs. S——, mother of the little girl already mentioned. You are aware that, maddened by the pain of burning pitch, one of the performers unconsciously dashed down a handful of ignited matches on a bundle of rockets. Two or three slight accidents to persons and apparel are said to have occurred during the explosion, yet few knew or noticed that this was not intentional, consequently no general alarm was felt; not a single scream was heard, and no eye followed the course of that ill-fated shaft; no heart dreamed of its deadly effect—not even the child reclining in her lap knew she was hurt until she fell. “*Somebody go for water,*” exclaimed Mrs. S——, who was the first to reach her; “*she has fainted!*” Dr. M——r started off in a run, but was soon recalled. “*Come back, she is AWFULLY hurt!*” added Mrs. S——, who, in attempting to raise her from where she had fallen “*altogether in a heap,*”

and wipe off, what in the imperfect light was supposed to be perspiration, discovered the wooden fragment of a rocket, an inch or more in diameter, projecting from her right eye and out at the back of her head. Friends and physicians gathered round, the missile was extracted and arrangements made for bearing her home. "*Her,*" no, not her, for once the crowd were right in their intuition—it could be called nothing else—for long before it was known *how* she was injured, or *who* was the victim, no one was heard to inquire, "*Is she hurt?*"—"Will she die?" but voices in every part of the concourse exclaimed simultaneously, "*She is dead!*" And they were *right*, they bore nothing away but the shattered cask from which the priceless gem had been suddenly and fearfully riven, to be set anew in the diadem of our God.

Some twenty minutes later I was roused from my first slumber by the appalling annunciation, "*Miss Celia L. is dead!*" "DEAD?" "Yes, she fell from one of the high back seats and broke her neck!" "She is *breathing* yet and *may live* some time longer," interposed an older and more considerate person. "Thank God, then her neck is *not* broken," was my involuntary response; and oh how earnestly did I pray that she might live—only live! But the hush of death, that brooded over the dense crowd that lined all the pavement without being able to gain admission, told me at once that there *was* no hope. And when I listened to the heart-rending entreaties of the almost-frantic mother, "*only* to be allowed to *speak once more* to her child, and *hold her hand in hers*, while life should last," I mentally resolved that no effort of mine should be spared to gratify her, if it could be done with safety to life and reason; or if that might not

be, to put away all physical weakness, all personal feeling, and stand faithfully there in her place, to interpret between the living and the dead. I knew, indeed, from the hoarse and unnatural voices around, that mine could not be recognized, but hoped, by announcing my name and suggesting certain signals, to obtain some answer to such questions as I should propose. The first glance told me how futile had been the expectation, how fatal to the mother would be the answer to her prayer, and I turned away, sickened to the very soul, that no accent of kindness could evermore reach that ear, that all effort was useless, all sympathy idle.

It had been found necessary to station a sentinel at the door, to secure unimpeded access and egress to her father and the Rev. Mr. R., and on entering I found a woman who was occasionally using a bowl and sponge, Mrs. S. and another lady, Dr. M—— and two or three older physicians, gazing, with folded arms and bloodless lips, in utter helplessness on the scene before them.

I knew instinctively that it was useless, yet compelled myself to gaze long and earnestly, and even critically, on every feature, and line, and motion, where reason, and thought, and intellect *were not*, till the eye absolutely refused to obey volition. It was not the low gurgling sound of the life-blood welling from the swollen and distorted lip, or the ghastly orifice from which oozed the mangled and discolored brain; nor yet the appalling sound of those low unearthly moans, that could so have revolted the eye from a form on which it had been wont to dwell long and lovingly. No, it was not any nor all of these, it was the conviction that it was *mere matter*, living, breathing, *suffering matter*, it is true, yet nothing *but matter* that lay there wreathing and writhing in the

agonies of dissolution. And wild, indeed, must have been the fancy that could trace, in those spasmodic throes of expiring nature, the voluntary and sentient exhibition of feeling and consciousness, yet to make assurance doubly sure, I remarked to one of the more experienced surgeons and physicians, "There is no hope?" "None whatever!" "Can it be possible that she is in the least degree conscious?" "Utterly impossible! The nerve of sensation was instantly destroyed—she has known nothing—could know nothing since!" And yet there are not wanting some, (less conspicuous for close personal observation, sound sense, and unwavering veracity, than the vulgar ambition of relating what no one else has heard,) who would fain persuade Mrs. L. that her daughter "was perfectly rational to the last;" and, of course, painfully conscious, that no mother's hand was there to smooth her dying pillow, no sister's voice to soothe her parting spirit. But do not you suffer any such absurd vagary to disturb you a moment—why even little Emily S. knows better. "No, Mrs. L." (says she,) "that she NEVER spoke," and her mother claims to have used something very like the expressions in question.

You ask for the funeral next and a description of her grave. The cemetery now in use, is a mile or more from the central portion of town, and sickness, either of ourselves or others, has as yet prevented Mrs. L. and her daughter, as well as myself, from visiting the spot. But Rev. Mr. R., (her dearest and most intimate friend, who, in connection with Dr. M——, selected the spot,) tells us—"We have put her away in a lovely grove, there to await the summons of Him who is "the resurrection and the life!" He delivered, in the parlor of the hotel,

not a regular sermon, but a most eloquent and appropriate discourse from Eccl., xii, 1st and 7th inclusive—sung by himself, her favorite, “I would not live away,” and was joined by as many of the congregation as were able to assist, in “Life is a span, a fleeting hour,” a hymn which either was, or was supposed to be, the one which had impressed her so peculiarly on the preceding Sunday evening.

Perhaps you would like to know how we prepared her body for the grave. At the suggestion of Mr. R., and in accordance with the not inappropriate custom which marks the distinction between matron and maid, her coffin was covered with white satin, but put on perfectly plain and neat, just as she would have had it; her form was arrayed, (by her mother’s request,) in a simple Swiss mull, in which I had once before attired her, to grace the wedding festivities of a wealthy and fashionable bride, numbered, still more recently than herself, with “the pale nations of the dead.” Her head was slightly inclined on the pillow, and the winding sheet and muslin shade draped so as to conceal as much as possible the disfigured side of her face, and over all were scattered a few pale flowers, (you know how well she loved them,) typical of youth, innocence, hope, and immortality. A few pieces of *Arbor Vitæ* were removed before closing down the lid; they now mark in *her* book the hymns sung on the occasion, and will be retained in their place, by a slip of ribbon left from the decorations of her “narrow house,” until the arrival of Mr. P.

And now my young friend, for are we not friends in a common sorrow, let it not grieve you that your beloved Cecilia died, comparatively speaking, among strangers; strangers perhaps as incompetent to appreciate her worth



as unable to excite a similar appreciation in return. Believe me, it *is* not so! In this life the "wheat and the tares" ever grow together, and *here* the weeds may predominate, and the elements of society be unusually slow to recognize their affinities, but she had begun to feel that *they were amalgamating*, and that there were some, even here, whom she would gladly include in her list of friends, no matter where her lot might in future be cast. And for herself, to you who knew her well, I need not say how ready she was, "to spend and be spent" in the service of God and man, so somebody would only take the eclat off her hands. But she could not always "do good by stealth," and pass undetected; and the deep and solemn stillness which pervaded all our streets on that melancholy day, when the stern mandate, "*dust to dust, ashes to ashes*," was executed in our midst, and the frequent and unmistakable manifestations of sympathy which continue to follow and surround the afflicted family, tell how strong was the lien she had made to herself, in a few short months, on the respect and affections of an apparently callous and reckless community.

Since my arrival, in January last, I have been domesticated with her for weeks in succession, and it has been my happiness to enjoy, notwithstanding the disparity of years, (for she was nearly young enough to have been my daughter,) as much perhaps of her society and friendship as was given to any lady of the place; and never before in my whole life have I witnessed such another example as hers. Not the first look, or word, or deed, can I now recall, which I could wish to forget, had each individual day been her last. Why were we not forewarned? Why did we dread for her the insidious ap-

proach of consumption? We did see that "all her duties were fulfilled," we should have felt—to quote again from her own expression—that her "destiny was accomplished!"

With the bereaved father, mother, brother, sister, and friends, there are many, very many, to sympathize; but with "the widowed, though unwed," there are fewer it is to be hoped who can feel in unison. Still there is one, at least, among us who knows that "light and a joy from this earth have passed, that shall never no never return to him again," who *feels* how lone and dreary must be the residue of *his* pilgrimage to that land "where lovely things and sweet pass not away."

Mr. L. will write to him in a few days, and Mrs. L. has already set apart for his use every article of her daughter's which he may wish to retain. Some others, including a lock of soft dark hair, will also be forwarded to yourself, unless you can be induced to come on with Mr. P. Aside from the personal regard which would at all times ensure you a cordial reception, the knowledge of your warm and long cherished attachment to her daughter, will now make you a thrice welcome guest on the darkened hearth of the mother. At her request I forward you some lines, intended solely for the family pale, but *truthfulness* being their chief if not only merit, you will please consider them an evidence of deep respect and implicit confidence on the part of your unknown but sympathizing

Friend,

LOUISE.

## TO CECILIA IN HEAVEN.

“Whom the Gods love die young.”

No stranger hand should sweep the lyre,  
 No wreath but friendship's round thee twine,  
 No colder heart should e'er aspire,  
 To link its thought, or name, with thine.

The guileless spirit turned to thee,  
 The passion-tossed, the tempest-tried;  
 The wand'rer on life's stormy sea,  
 In trust, unbaffled, sought thy side.

For thou, while in the world, wert not  
 Of those who loved its changeling form;  
 And blessed art thou, that thy lot  
 Is cast, beyond its smile and storm.

No sorrowing for the loved ones here  
 Hung heavy on thy spirit's flight;  
 No parting pang, no mortal fear,  
 Earth's shadow cast on heavenly light.

“We know that thou hast passed to lands,  
 Fairer than all that wooed thy stay;  
 Yet who that treads life's burning sands,  
 Exults for streams, far far away?”

The parent stem for thee must pine,  
 Another mourn *life's vision* fled;  
 “Earth *had* no love for him like thine,  
 And that, and thou, are with the dead.”

A voice of wail goes up to heaven,  
 Earth's sod is wet with many tears;  
 God stay the stem so sorely riven!  
 God shield the loved of woman's years!

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## LETTER XVI.

TO AN UNFORTUNATE AND MISGUIDED FRIEND,

*Inserted in the vague hope that it may yet reach one,  
 beguiled into a mesalliance of very doubtful legali-  
 ty, while in, (or near,) the state described by the old  
 Scottish phrase, "A bee in the bonnet."*

———, Louisiana, 1850.

MY OLD AND DEAR FRIEND:

It is long, very long, since you and I have had any direct intercourse, and much easier to sever than reunite the chain of a broken correspondence, where the address is so precarious as ours; but I know you will gladly overlook some trifling annoyances, to hear once more the accents of kindness and affection from a friend of your youth.

After repeated inquiries I have at length learned where you were at "the last advices," and that you "left under circumstances too painful and humiliating for the writer to disclose or me to learn;" but recollecting one of our later conversations, can readily divine that after your cousin Jane's decease, the house of her husband became a perfect Pandemonium to you, till wrongs, insults, and indignities without name or redress drove you at last to desperation. For "desperation," indeed,

it is, my dear Aline, for weak, powerless woman to rebel, in the smallest iota, against the conventionalities established for her perpetual subjugation; and well is it for her, that there is ONE TRIBUNAL still to which she can appeal from the *injustice* of man's dominion, ONE BAR where the servant is free from his master, and the oppressor held responsible as well as his victim.

You, my dear unfortunate friend, were incapable of reflecting calmly upon this or any other subject, when, in the madness of passion or frenzy of despair, you descended from your station in life and wedded your fate to the Prof. of Animal Magnetism, said to have gained such "*complete MESMERIC CONTROL over you*" in a chamber of sickness which you could not with propriety shun. If this were so, you certainly were not a free moral agent, and ought not to be held responsible as such, though the cold, carping, busy world has no time for such nice discriminations between the "sinned against" and the sinning. But oh, these "sir owls" that sit in the arcana of science, and slumber and sneer on the confines of a mighty mystery, why, why will they not arouse to investigate and define the laws that govern this subtle agency? If a half-crazy philosophy has caught the inkling of a magnificent truth, and diffused it through a world of chimera, it surely is not the part of wisdom to leave it there in sole possession of visionaries and charlatans.

Your companion is, it seems, one of its professed exponents, but as I make no inuendo insinuations and mean no unprovoked and useless outrage on his feelings, or wanton insult to your own, you, at least, must excuse my seeming—remember it is only *seeming*—cruelty in saying, that I too think it just possible, (under existing circumstances,) that you may not be his lawful wife.

Forgive, *forgive*, I know how deeply I wound, and would to God I could present these unpalatable truths in a less painful light; but as sure as there are immortal interests at stake, I almost *hope you are not*, though otherwise, I know that not the purity of an angel of light could shield you from the imputation of occupying what all men, with a scarce repressed sneer, would call "*a not very equivocal position*," while all women would cry "*amen*," though less perhaps from innate conviction than the selfish, ignoble instinct of self-preservation. I say *all women*, because the few who would *dare*, (or care,) *to be just*, are seldom in a position to make their remonstrance felt.

But when this mental hallucination shall have passed away, and this mystic influence have exhausted its power, as soon or late it most surely will, and old habits of life and modes of thought begin to resume their accustomed sway, *then* your proud, sensitive spirit will chafe "like a lion in the toils," and this is one reason why I hope you are not bound for life to one, who, in the pride of human intellect, has, I am told, taught you to deride your Maker, and scoff at the name of your Redeemer.

Oh *Aline!* *Aline!* can this be so? Alas, I fear it may; for am not I, too, guilty, *most guilty* of having, in days that are past, fostered *your* incipient doubts by so freely expressing my own. I was older than yourself and should have reflected oftener than I did, that if there *were no reality* there could be no counterfeit. And yet it was never the occasional aberrations inseparable from human weakness, nor even the impious and systematic hypocrisy exhibited in "the high places of the sanctuary, that made me once doubt *what religion*

was, half so much as the preposterous and abstruse metaphysics, "crammed into my youthful ears against the stomach of my sense." It is much to be regretted, that some zealous modern religionists should labor so hard to supersede the Apostolic definition of that religion which is "pure and undefiled before God and the Father;" however, you will learn my sentiments on that head from the inclosed soliloquy.\* True, you may not think it either learned, poetic, or wise; but you and I are not wise, Aline, at least I am not, and I have no present so do not destroy my future. Life has to me been a weary warfare; after suffering and toil there must needs be repose, and where else can we moor our shattered, tempest-tossed barks more securely than on the Rock of Ages? "*Man must have some belief;*" says the melancholy but gifted priest of Apis, so I say, with the dying mother to her noble but misguided son, "CHARLES, CHARLES! *give me back my FAITH—give me back my hope of heaven!*"

You too need higher consolation than earth has to impart; for I know that you have suffered—that you are wretched! The delirium, or the torpor of excitement cannot last forever; the reaction, with its "after hour of gloom," *must* come, and the bitter pang of self-reproach, or *distrust*, mingle with the sad, *sad* tears that fall over the blight of your early promise. May God and you forgive me for having left you to struggle *alone* against such talents and influence as were combined for the subversion of your faith in all moral excellence! The atrocious and unnatural villain! I can scarce say, *God forgive him*; for this is his work—his! He took

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\* Piece entitled, "What is Truth."

you, a young, sinless child, generous, noble, high-minded and pure; and what has he made you now? Whom did he, "in the livery of heaven," make his own intimate friends and associates of one who should have been dear unto him as a daughter, but men infamous for their conjugal infidelities, and open and avowed infidels, who could shamelessly congratulate themselves in *her* presence; that "*such talents as his* would not long submit to the FLUMMERY of *pretending* to believe in Christianity?" Yes he it is—none so much as he—who is guilty, *guilty* before God of your moral degradation!

Forgive me if I did, or do, either of your parents injustice even in thought; but I should have advised you to confide in your mother, had I not known one woman, who would have been a mocking fiend instead of a faithful friend or judicious counselor on such an occasion, and feared that you might know such another. And besides, I *hoped* that a happy and honorable marriage would soon extricate you from a position of such peculiar delicacy and peril, without hazarding the frail tenure of kindred and domestic peace. But I was wrong, all wrong; yet what has the world done for us, that we should cling to it so fondly and wish to consider it the ultimatum of our existence?

You and I had beauty, Aline, (and you may have it still,) but for want of the golden setting it availed us not. We had also talent—so at least the world was pleased to say—well, that too was useless. It did not suffice to break the chain that bound us to an evil destiny, worse than useless; for by enabling us "to see all others' faults and feel our own," it eminently *unfitted* us for plodding with becoming zest through the treadmill-pace of our every-day life of weary toil, or more



galling dependence, while the "sickness of hope deferred" wasted away the first freshness of our youth in vain yearnings for a freedom and independence that might never be ours. But is not this intense, restless longing for something higher and better than earth has to impart—this daring contumacity which refuses to swallow all sorts of paradoxical creeds, without having the presumption to *think* of understanding them, "an undying evidence that there is divinity within us that will not be forever 'cabined, cribbed, confined,' or resolved again into the material elements like the frail tenement in which it is enshrined?" Yes, yes, it must be so—I feel that I am immortal, that I have an expansive, never-dying intellect; and never, *never*, be it said of us,

"That we were born

Taller than we might walk beneath the stars,  
And with a spirit, tempered like a god's,  
Were sent forth blindfold on a path of light,  
And turned aside, and perished;"

for oh, "how poor is the rich gift of genius," if it serve only to light us to perdition.

You do not know how deeply I grieve over whatever may have been your errors or your wrongs; Agnes, too, mourns over you as a sister lost—speaks most gratefully of your kindness to her in the hour of sickness and sorrow—tells of your unwearied devotion to the children of your cousin Jane, (*she* was always good and kind to the last, and much more like a relative than her husband, was she not?) and I do hope you may yet meet a reward even in this life! If not, "there is a land, I name not here, where we may meet again;" and may "peace, the peace of God that passeth all understanding," yet enter into your soul, and keep your heart and mind in perfect peace."

But I have not done; *should* a time ever come when even you can struggle no longer against the conviction that your present connection is one which it is right and proper to abandon, it is quite possible that the father, who it seems has not interposed for your protection hitherto, may then close his doors too, against his erring and unfortunate child, more especially if he have other daughters still under his roof. Excuse me if I speak too plainly, I mean not to wound but to heal, and what I would say is this: *Should* that time find me possessed of a home where there was none to overrule my will, that home should be your refuge against "the strife of evil tongues," if you choose to accept it. But alas! this is a visionary hope, for there is far more prospect of my arriving speedily at "the house appointed for all the living," than to any other of my own. Teaching is so perfectly suicidal to me, that for every year that I serve it takes me at least two to recruit; of course I am always sick and always poor. *Now* I am hopelessly invalided, and my LITERARY and *last resort* is all untried as yet; but my kindest wishes and fervent prayers are yours, and the best counsel and *most efficient aid in my power to bestow*, shall also be at your service whenever you think proper to claim them. If the world were more truly virtuous it could better afford to be a little less censorious; but should its cold suspicious wisdom judge me harshly and unjustly for this, some gentle one has already prepared a most beautiful and appropriate reply:

"Think gently of the erring,  
Ye know not of the power,  
With which the dark temptation came  
In some unguarded hour."

Ye may not know how earnestly  
They struggled, or how well,  
Until the hour of weakness came,  
And sadly thus they fell.

“*Think* gently of the erring,  
Oh do not thou forget,  
However darkly stained by sin,  
He is thy brother yet.  
Heir of the self-same heritage,  
Child of the self same God;  
He hath but stumbled on the path  
Thou hast in weakness trod!

“*Speak* gently to the erring,  
For is it not enough  
That innocence and peace are gone,  
Without thy censure rough?  
It sure must be a weary lot,  
That sin-crushed heart to bear;  
And they who share a happier fate,  
Their chidings well may spare.

“*Speak* gently to the erring,  
Thou yet mayst lead them back,  
With holy words and tones of love,  
From misery’s thorny track.  
Forget not thou hast often sinned,  
And sinful yet must be;  
Deal gently with the erring one,  
As God hath dealt with thee!”

It is not well to outrage wantonly or needlessly a single prescription of the world—it is *very far from well* to suffer the weak, cowardly fear of its censure to deter one from so obvious a duty as the effort to “save a soul from death,” and to those who think and act differently, I would merely say, “let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall!”

I expect to leave soon, and my future address is un-

certain; but you can inclose, (for you will write, will you not?) to Dr.\*\*\*, of this place, and he will redirect and forward wherever it may be necessary.

Your sincere and sorrowing friend,

LOUISE.

LINES SUGGESTED BY AN OLD PRINT;

*In which a faded beauty catches unexpectedly the reflection from a mirror, while looking over poetic and other mementoes of by-gone days.*

AND can it be this faded brow  
 Was once a shrine of beauty rare?  
 That round this sunken cheek, there waved  
 Such wealth of "silken chestnut hair,"  
 That poets vowed "earth had not seen  
 A face, or form, more passing fair;"  
 And matrons cried, "that hand, I ween,  
 Time may not set his impress there:—"

And wits averred "the matchless shrine  
 Scarce worthy of the gem within;"  
 And the frail mortal deemed "*divine*,"  
 (God knows it was a grievous sin.)  
 Yet manhood's voice indorsed the line,  
 And youth, and age, declared it sooth;  
 And lovers knelt their life to time  
 In worship of "the spirit's truth!"

The fragile cask is shattered now,  
 The living pearl within grown dim;  
 Poet and lover ceased to vow—  
 In heaven they peal a loftier hymn.

And I can scan my altered brow,  
 Nor mourn its parted, wasted sheen;  
 Ages of bitter mem'ries roll  
 Me and its primal light between.

River, and lake, and Alpine snows  
 Hide all of earth my soul could crave;  
 And there, in dreams, my spirit goes—  
 Each spot 'tis hallowed by a grave!  
 And yet their shadow may not blight  
*All* of earth's lonely, farewell strand;  
 Life is not *all* a blank, while light  
 From heaven illumines its ebbing sand.

September, 1850.

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## LETTER XVII.

TO A YOUNG LAWYER IN WASHINGTON.

*Treatise on Law, Morals and Politics.*

*Caddo Pa., La., Jan. 1, 1851.*

MY DEAR—

I suppose I must not say, my *little* cousin, though I can scarce realize that the urchin whom I left some fifteen years since is now a man, in stature and intellect. But what have you been doing, I should like to know, more than “elevating the ancient Henry” after the most approved fashion for modern youngsters, that your loving and judicious sister should invoke the contents of my ink-bottle for your unsuspecting head? Nothing worse, I hope, than evincing a stronger predilection for political

life than she thinks expedient for you to indulge under existing circumstances ; but if I am to be privy counsel, and lecturer-general, it is proper I should be advised of the precise nature of your peccadilloes, you know.

And, seriously, dear Clarence, there may be something more than woman's caprice under your sister's apprehensions ; for, indeed, I scarce know, myself, whether to regret or rejoice at your success, *out* of the immediate line of your profession. That profession, it is fair to presume, was one of your own voluntary choice ; it is, at least, an honorable one, despite the "quips and quirks, and paper bullets of the brain," launched against it from time immemorial: thanks to its mere fungi, or parasitic excrecences, whose highest ambition is to "live of the law," by torturing the body till they wrest it from the soul. May you never forget that *the end of the law* is the administration of justice ; and ever remember that no man can truly elevate himself without ennobling, instead of debasing by the leprosy of his own meanness, any profession that he calls his own !

Law, however, is said to be a jealous mistress, and, if so, can hardly be expected to tolerate a rival who will inevitably engross much of your attention, and scarce find your most untiring devotion at all commensurate with her own mighty exactions. I speak of politics, in the legitimate and nobler sense, not of the mushroom, long-tongued spuria, indigenous to bar-rooms, debating-clubs, town-meetings, and other institutions for cultivating the gift of the gab, which ought, like sewing societies, to be indicted for public nuisances ; though even this vapid, shameless brazen-face has often—much oftener, no doubt, than the real Simon Pure—proved fatal to the prospects of many a "rising young man,"

whose hopes once pointed to a far different goal. But it cannot be *this* impudent "Ne'er-do-weel" that has ensnared your "youthful fancy:" no, I hope and expect better things of you; and know, too, something of the obstacles that repel, of the *contretemps* which beset each avenue to legal distinction, while the youthful aspirant is struggling against fearful odds for a place side by side with the master-spirits of his order—something what it is to run the gauntlet, in a city like yours, among those less incumbered, perhaps, than yourself, with the independent spirit, morbid sensibility, and inadequate fortunes of an old but impoverished race. But it is the first step that costs; and you, it is said, have achieved, much earlier than usual, the reputation of being "a very promising young lawyer;" so now, if you have only the energy and ability to *maintain* the race, *equibus passibus*, the rest will be comparatively easy: if you have not, Heaven help you; for what and where are your qualifications for a statesman?

And further, your reception and subsequent success at the bar may have been flattering; but your position can hardly be so assured as yet that you could hope to resume it some time in the indefinite future, without going all over the same or a worse ground—and that you would hardly fancy—should experience demonstrate your own unfitness for a high political career. But the misfortune of it is, so few ever do discover their own unfitness, though it may be palpable as day to others; for the thick veil of self-delusion obstructs the perception, and the "iron gyves" of habit bind them so fast to an accustomed sphere, that they linger on, *on*, in the protracted agonies of hope deferred, till they sink at last—with tempers and feelings soured and imbibited

by the secret goadings of a restless and insatiate ambition, and the galling consciousness of unappreciated, because misapplied, talent—into the sniveling, sneering, querulous misanthrope, or more despicable hack of “the little great,” whom neither “gods nor men endure!”

I speak feelingly of the despotism of habit, for has it not bound me, for years, to a calling from which I recoil with an aversion no tongue can describe, *by the simple process* of making it all but impossible for those who might otherwise have broken my chain, to think of me, or for me, except in connection with that avocation? And you know, I suppose, why the paralytic of old beheld, when the waters were troubled, others stepping down before him. May I not, then, with reason, deprecate the possibility of seeing those fatal though impalpable links slowly but surely encircling your whole moral nature, while you know so little, and I so well, “how hard that chain will press at last!” And God defend and preserve you, and all I hold dear, from ever degenerating into that fag-end of all contemptibility, a mean, cringing, supple-kneed, time-serving sycophant and demagogue! Thus far, no such venomous dragon’s tooth has ever yet desecrated the family name by his own unmitigated infamy, or infused the gangrene of his viperous baseness into the blood of our race; and “Heaven forefend” that any of its future representatives should ever have cause to blush for so foul a stain on the honor of their forefathers!

Not that I care, though, very particularly about those any longer before than our own immediate progenitors. The solemn, conceited prigs! What right had they to fold the mantle of their olden dignity so calmly around them,



and sit quietly down in the selfish enjoyment of hereditary independence, and make no provision for the future? *None*; so, as for the more remote ancestry, his royal and gracious majesty, the First Charles, might have had my full and free permission to “compliment” every soul of them with the ax!\* This may sound rather harsh; but why should posterity care for those who cared never for them, or aught else save their own ease, since the very memorable, “never-to-be-forgotten” (much to be regretted,) “day,” when that stalwart band of hard-headed, half crazy, self-righteous fanatics, poetically styled the “commonwealth of kings,” squatted themselves down on Plymouth Rock one bitter cold morning, with the godly intent of praying and shooting Indians just whenever they thought proper?

Now, had they been men of shallow, common-place minds, instead of being what tradition says they were, such a course of procedure would not have been so very surprising. But you know—or, more likely, you don't know—that the late Mr. S—— (himself a man of no mean talents or attainments), used to say of our grandfather even, that he never felt himself “so completely overawed, and so much like a pigmy in the hands of a giant,” as when coming in contact with “his intellectual powers;” yet he, I think, never considered himself, or was considered, the equal of his father and elder brother. But what were he and they, and all the “mute, inglorious Hampdens” the world ever saw, good for, I should like to know? If he never “*said* a foolish thing,” I am sure he never “*did* a wise one,” unless his giving the

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\* Vide Sir Robert Walpole: “He *deserves* the *halter* for running his goose's neck into such a noose; but, in respect to his noble blood, I suppose we must compliment him with the ax.”

five-and-twenty legacies left his country in the shape of children and grandchildren—and for which I don't see that that same country is at all the wiser, richer, or happier, or any way specially bound to be grateful—some little chance for good old Milesian blood and mother-wit, comes under that category.

You see I don't exactly mean to insinuate that *all* the intellect has gone out with the black eyes and patrimonial acres; nor have I the slightest intention of underrating your abilities. Of mere talent, I dare say you have *quantum suff.*; most of the family have even now; but that is a minor consideration. For you may, as Clara intimates, be “abundantly able to keep your own counsel;” have any reasonable amount of patrician *nonchalance* and hereditary obstinacy—*firmness* it is proper to call it, is it not, when developed in the masculine form?—your perceptions may be clear and rapid as intuition; your thoughts concentrated and vigorous almost to a fault; your mind sufficiently comprehensive in its grasp; and you, to crown the whole, be thoroughly persuaded of your own transcendent merits, and yet, and yet want many a *sine qua non* for a statesman.

Have you the far-reaching benevolence that feels for humanity as its brother; the lofty magnanimity that could nerve you, if need were, to sacrifice not only your own, but the interests of your dearest earthly friend, on the altar of your country's weal? Is your frame tempered of iron, and your spirit “to the happy callosity of an oyster?” If not, depend upon it, you are most unfit for the guerilla warfare of political life. You may “enmail your soul with high endurance,” and bear up bravely for awhile, to all external appearance; but, soon or late, the iron will be found to have entered the soul!

Oh, I fear for you, my young cousin! If you have naught but the fragile constitution and highly nervous temperament of your paternal line—if, in short, the blade be too keen for the scabbard—what boots it that you start gloriously on your career—that your sword flashes brightest in the onset, and men look on in wonder and in fear? *It cannot last*, and, in some inauspicious hour, the faithless steel will betray its trust, and leave you to be borne down in the conflict by mere animal power, or distanced in the race long ere the goal be won!

But, supposing you have all mental, and moral and physical endowments, in rare and almost unprecedented perfection, you may, you must, still want one essential element of success; I mean pecuniary independence. How *can* a man, harassed by the ever recurring question—"What shall I eat and what shall I drink, and wherewithal shall I be clothed"—bring the full scope of his mind to bear upon the exposition and adjustment of intricate and conflicting claims? How can he give his undivided energies to the solution of a disquisition, subtile in form and complicated in bearing? We are, at best, but frail, erring mortals, with human wants, human weakness, and human causes of annoyance indissolubly intertwined with every fiber of our nature, every ramification and phase of our existence. And how is it possible for a being so situated always to abide, unflinchingly, by his own conviction of what is just and right, when all the world—his political world I mean—cries out that he is "*mistaken*," that he is "*wrong*;" and the very bread, perhaps, of those dearer to him than his own life, absolutely depends on his yielding his "*preferences*," at the imperious edict of an overbearing mob-

ocracy, ever ready to apply the thumb-screws of official torture to the soul? It is easy for the casuist to lay down his inflexible rules, and say it must be thus and so; very easy for the looker-on to hurl invective and denunciation at him who swerves, in the smallest iota, from *his* criterion of what is proper and right; but, depend upon it, dear Clarence, there *are* emergencies which try men's souls far more than the unequal contest with physical power.

Do you recollect Goldsmith's half-earnest, half-jesting epitaph on the living Burke, whom he declared "equal to all things, yet for all things unfit;" and is there not deep and melancholy significance in the fact that the assertion of his having "narrowed his mind, and to party given up what was meant for mankind," follows, almost as a natural and inevitable sequence, from the prior declaration that he was "too *poor* for a patriot," though "too proud for a wit?" Think of all this; think, calmly and dispassionately, before you venture on giving the "unspiritual god" such vantage ground as may ultimate in the subversion of your moral integrity. I cannot fear that a son of *your* father's training should want moral feeling sufficiently high-toned and acute, and I would not doubt the stability of your moral principles! But yet, with all the wealth of your young affections, all the pride of your early manhood and conscious power, you are but the veriest novice, after all, in the tortuous, Machiavelian policy of sectarian, sectional and political intrigue and diplomacy. And let me remind you, once again, my "high-reaching" cousin, there are, there must be, many occasions in a civic career which require something more than the pride of opinion, the abstract conviction of right, or the

quiet, stubborn, innate hauteur of all your race, to preserve one's honor and conscience unsullied and pure!

Thus far, we have been looking through a microscope at the petty affairs of this every-day life: now let us take up the telescope, and look, for a moment, beyond the stars! *Ah, the things that are SEEN are temporal—the things that are UNSEEN are eternal!* Here then is a subject, *worthy* the mortal heir of an immortal destiny! And if it be *so difficult for the young* to turn away from the present and bring the far-off future *near* but for one short hour—so “*very hard*” for “a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God,” *what must it be* for him who has gone on from youth to age, linking himself closer and closer, with each revolving year, to the hopes and schemes, the passions and interests of this transitory life, till the frosts of many winters settle on his brow, and the fading eye, and feeble step, and tottering form, proclaim, too clearly to be misunderstood, that “the places which now know him shall soon know him no more forever?” What must it be, I say, for such a one to unwind all the subtle chord of association that binds him with its thousand links to old habits of life and modes of thought—turn away from earth its cares and vicissitudes, its pleasures and honors, and seek.

“Mid the green places of the soul,  
For that pure, life-giving tide  
That wells with hope, and love, and truth,  
The fountain of perpetual youth?”

The last twenty years have, it is true, furnished two eminent instances of this high moral effort, but they stand on the barren field of political life, almost unprecedented and alone in their solitary splendor—rich monu-

ments of the superabounding grace of God, and lofty beacons to warn alike the undistinguished throng and their gifted compeers "in that stern strife which leads to life's high places," that *this* is not their rest—that man has another and a loftier destiny. And well was it for the owner of one of those immortal names, "that were not born to die," that the disappointment so galling to his country's pride, so disastrous to its interests, secured to him, it may be, in the calm shades of domestic retirement, that "more convenient season" that might never have been found, had he been encumbered with the care of a nation's weal! And well, indeed, is it, if—

'Standing on what too long he bore,  
With shoulders bent, and downcast eyes,  
He has discerned—unseen before—  
The path to higher destinies."

But oh how often, how often, does the recurrence of adverse examples admonish us, more eloquently than a thousand tongues, to "seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness."

How is it with you, my inexperienced cousin? Have you given your "human heart to God in its beautiful hour of youth?" If so, let the tempest of life and the surges of faction howl and madden around you as they will, they cannot unmoor the bark that is anchored securely on the "Rock of Ages." If not, let me entreat you to remember, that "he builds too low who builds beneath the skies." For were it indeed possible, that the holy hope of the Christian should eventually flit away like the dream of a dream, it is still something—oh yes, it is much—that the weary in heart and broken in spirit, can yet hear a voice crying unto them, "Come unto me all

ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." Much that the homeless and desolate can still be enabled to feel, that in their "Father's house are many mansions," and look up from "life's endless endeavor" to that rest in the skies, in the fullness of unwavering hope and unfaltering trust!

For myself, the dew has long since vanished from the rose, the sparkle from the wine of life; but not for that would I cast the shadow of its evening cloud over the brightness of your morning prime. Nor would I put you again in leading-strings, or say of any particular line of exertion, "*This is the way, walk ye in it.*" Far from it; all I wish is, or rather, (what is much more to the purpose,) all, I presume, that Clara wishes, is, that you should *weigh yourself well now*, lest you should hereafter be weighed in the balances of two worlds and found "*wanting.*"

But let others think as they will, it surely is not for me, who knows so well the *cost* and *consequences* of attempting to chain, and task, and torture the rebel will that chafes and struggles to be free, wasting, in vain effort, the strength that might otherwise have launched it gloriously on its own chosen career;—oh no, it is not for me to thwart an inclination so deep-seated and strong, that it "parts not quite with parting breath." If yours be of that cast—if nothing less will satisfy the measure of your life-long yearning—if you do feel the calm consciousness of power, the full plenitude of the divinity within—if law or aught else has ever been with you, but as "a means to an end," then I say GO ON, and woe be to the hand that would voluntarily rise up to throw another obstacle in your path, or seek to arrest your onward course! I would not, if I could, interdict

a career that had once perhaps been mine had my sex been stern as my fate, that had most surely been his, in whose "burial urn" I laid my youth "where sunshine might not find it." Had he lived his name was not destined to have been "written on the roll of common men;" and I scarce know—either for Clara's sake or your own—whether to hope, or to fear, that his mantle has descended upon you; but should aught I have said appear to you a little "less than kind," *think* that I have said more perhaps than I should, but for the conviction, never entirely to be shaken off, that it was my "unreined ambition" seconding his own that stimulated him into an early grave.

But if with you "*life is nothing, youth*"—the immortal youth of intellect—"is all"—if indeed you do go on, let no secondary rank bound the limit of your aim—the highest, *the highest*, for you, my proud cousin, or none! Remember, however, that it is not the rank of office, that *ultima thule* of the vulgar mind, to which I allude. Oh no! there are distinctions far nobler and more ennobling than these. Can you tell who performed the role of magistracy in Athens, while Demosthenes wielded the destinies of Greece? I fancy not, and as little do I care. And whenever I hear "the first of living statesmen" lauded for his MAGNANIMITY in *withdrawing his name* on a certain occasion, I always long to correct the phraseology, by saying, for *suffering it to be used at all* in such a connection.

It is at all times proper to "tread lightly on the ashes of the illustrious dead;" it is peculiarly so now, that the late Chief Magistrate has so recently departed alike from the arena of martial and political strife; and few, it is to be hoped, are so unhappily warped by passion and



prejudice as to withhold the meed of respect and affection, so eminently due to his important services, sterling sense, and lofty integrity of purpose. It is also a matter of more than party or sectional congratulation, that his successor has the moral stamina to stand up *like a man* at his post; yet for the mere incumbent of office, *as such*, I have a most "*infinitesimal*" regard, and consequently never find it in my heart to yield him more than the slightest passing tribute of respect, though I can bow down my whole soul at the shrine of that higher nobility, nor feel degraded by its homage. Still I really do wish—just for the novelty of the thing—that I actually could feel for one half hour as others appear to feel, all their lives, in reference to office in the abstract. Some noble soul does, to be sure, throw, from time to time, the prestige of his own individual greatness around the mockery of its hollow forms; but the halo recedes with the setting sun—it will not linger to hallow the spot or gild the lack-luster brows of those "accidents of an accident" that too often succeed. Yet somehow so it is, that others "see a form I cannot see, and hear a voice I cannot hear," for *to me* there is no "*excelsior*" inscribed on the Executive Chair. What is it, and a thousand such, with all the paraphernalia and parade of factitious dignity, to the priceless birthright of genius—the nobility not born of the "most sweet voices" of the mob—what, for instance, are all their titles and honors to the simple, "world-wide renowned name" of HENRY CLAY? Any "rabble rout" can help to make a President. "An honest man's the noblest work of God!"

Had I visited the Capital during his interregnum, it is just possible I might have been as much astonished

as a certain dry old Tennessee Judge once professed to be on hearing the census of Virginia, "after having," (as he said,) "been *so long* under the impression"—derived from a very *mediocre* F. F. V. of his acquaintance—"that there was *nobody there* but BENJAMIN WADKINS LEIGH;" for verily Washington without its presiding genius is a nonentity to me.

This reminds me to inquire, have you paid your respects as yet? If not, let me request you to do so on the first suitable occasion; not, indeed, with the mean, pitiful servility of a poor, sneaking, political toady, panting to catch the skirts of some great man, in whose broad wake he hopes to scull his ricketty craft into the snug harbor of power and place, but with the cordial unpretending deference which every sensible, well-behaved young gentleman in the land, *honestly owes* to one who has "rode these many summers on a sea of glory"—a deference alike honorable to the giver and receiver. But you are, I trust, *better trained* than to mistake insolent familiarity for manly independence, or modesty for meanness. True modesty is perfectly compatible with a just appreciation of one's-self as well as others; and I question if there is not more plausibility than profundity in the received *ipse dixit*, "Diffidence of our own abilities is a sure indication of wisdom."

A man of gigantic intellect may, it is true, feel at times that it is "no such great things after all," because *he* never knew what it was to have an ordinary one, and it may, and no doubt often does, seem very small to him in comparison with what he is able to conceive; but if so immeasurably superior to those around, it is, to say the least, a little remarkable that a mind of strong powers and acute perceptions, should fail to perceive

what is obvious to the dullest comprehension. "Can a man hold fire in his hand by thinking on the frosty Caucasus?" Can he bear about this glittering curse of genius, nor feel its circlet of ice—its serpent of fire girdling and crushing his heart and stinging his brain almost to madness? Impossible! He may regret, and endeavor to hide, the world—the cold, careless, envious or busy world—overlook, mistake, deny, or strive to stifle and ignore its existence; but it is there! it is there!—a glory and a grief, a joy a crown and a thorn, a seraph, a taunting, mocking fiend; but never, never more to depart till life (or reason) and it go out together! So, do not fold your hands, sit down and flatter yourself that inertia or imbecility is modesty.

This recalls an observation made a few months since by a lady in De Soto, herself the worthy and highly talented daughter of "an old historic line," namely, "that this thing called 'modest merit' was a very pretty thing, *a most beautiful thing*, to talk about; but good for no earthly use whatever, except to keep formidable competition out of the way of more brazen and less gifted aspirants."

The remark was made expressly for my benefit; it is now repeated for yours; because, I take it for granted, one grand difficulty with the whole "kith and kin" is, that they lack assurance, or some other interpreter, to translate them out of themselves. Here am I now, can talk—Oh, very brave!—to a piece of white paper; and yet—with lip curling, quivering and closed, as if "ne'er to ope again"—be driven back into myself, by the first "cold, uncomprehending look" or chilling tone, there indignantly to deplore "the hard and hapless situation of a bard" compelled to find not only the wit but sense

to appreciate it; and spurn and scorn, from my inmost soul, the inveterate stolidity of that "many-headed monster thing" ever ready to worship the rising sun, and "pile Peliou upon Ossa" to keep it below the horizon as long as it possibly can! Oh, it's all a mistake: these philosophers know nothing at all about the matter; *cold* is *not* a "negative property!"—just let them *feel it once* settling down on the heart, as I have done hundreds of times, and they would soon know better! But all the spirit-vacillations, mind you, and all the incarnate Zeros in the universe, *never reach my* PURPOSE; worlds should not bribe me to relinquish that: I think I should die or go mad within a week, if I *knew* it to be hopeless!

"*True woman,*" I dare say you are thinking, (of course, what else should I be?) "'and variable as the shade by the light, quivering aspen made;'" but, to dismiss the single specimen and return to the residue. They are—the *men* I mean—so indomitably proud or reserved, or conceited or indolent, or something of the sort, that they expect everybody to appreciate them intuitively, without their ever taking the pains or making the condescension to insinuate that they are, as Willis' Interrogator expresses it, *anybody in particular*. Now, this will never do. "The wise world laughs at fables; dream no more!" It was not by idle reverie that *my* ideal of a clear-headed statesman and chivalrous gentleman, soared to his present "pride of place!"

The old Romans decreed the OAKEN LEAF as the most fitting award to him who saved the life of the drowning; and has not he, whose pride has ever been

To cast the healing salt into the bitter waters,  
twice plunged into the maddened vortex of faction; twice

stemmed its tide to rescue his country and constitution from destruction; and twice, aye, thrice, bound his brow with a garland far nobler than the wreath of empire? Yes, "and the laurel is earned that binds his brow," and I would rather call that man my friend, than be crowned "queen of beauty and of song," by half the residue of his species! We shall never meet face to face in this life, but we *shall* meet, yes we shall meet, in that land where pecuniary disabilities no longer keep asunder, wide as the poles, those who might otherwise rejoice to know and appreciate each other.\*

You may chance to be a dissentient, if so, do not annoy me, I entreat, with any odious old saws about gentlemen and their valets, "Distance" and "Enchantment;" or waste any valuable time attempting to dispel what you, in your presumption, may esteem *the veriest illusion*. You would fail, I have a presentiment, for "I cannot spare the luxury of believing that some things beautiful *are* what they seem!" And beside, a woman's politics being no manner of consequence, the world should tolerate all manner of harmless illusions in me; for without them, what should I know of life "but its real misery?" But mind I don't admit that there can, by any possibility, be an illusion in this instance—no, he surely is that rare phenomenon—a real patriot, an earnest true-hearted statesman, and honest, high-minded man! And yet *this* is mere tautology; for the doctrine that one may be a knave in

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\* Well I am not quite a Cassandra yet it seems—any more than poverty and sickness are the most delightful of all masters of ceremonies, though something should be forgiven to them—but the diamond is a diamond still, place it in whatever light you will.

public, yet honest in private life, would be shocking impiety, if it were not most ridiculous nonsense. Let us see—it means I suppose, that it is “very right proper,” and in fact almost the “bounden duty” of a politician, to bamboozle, humbug, and betray as many *thousands* as he can; though it would be exceedingly reprehensible, dishonest, and infamous, for him to cheat or defraud a single one. Well, I am getting rather antiquated, it’s true, and losing perhaps, the proper signification of the “king’s English;” and may be it doesn’t take exactly ten hundred to make up a thousand now as it used to “in my day:” so it’s all right I suppose, just upon the principle, that abstracting five or ten dollars, is “*stealing*,” whereas making off, with a few hundred thousand, or half a million, is only a *splendid defalcation*. But isn’t that beautiful logic, charming ethics? “And ne’er a word a true one;” for he who is “God-ward, a very faithful, upright man, but man-ward, a little twistical,” has not even the merit of being an accomplished hypocrite, much less an honest man. He who plunders the public, will rob his neighbor and swindle his brother when it serves his turn. He who mystifies and misleads the crowd, knowingly and willfully, will falsify with his friend, prevaricate with his wife, deceive his child, and take “a lie in his right hand,” into the very presence of his Maker. Never do you, my dear cousin, take any man to your confidence, who advocates this absurd yet mischievous sophism, in any conceivable form; for however else you may fail; you owe it to yourself, your God, and your name; to keep your honor and conscience intact and without shadow of stain!

“*Oh hone a ree*,” was ever such another incarnate

statute of limitations? Here is scarce room enough for "the gist of a lady's letter," to wit, a postscript of orthodox dimensions! Well, it can't be helped, so you are reprieved for this time, and I must reserve two capital subjects—Idleness and Dissipation; moral, social, and literary—for a future essay. In the meantime you are to thank Clara for this, and would do well to make her read it (and see that it is done *secundum artem*), otherwise she might insist on your keeping up the correspondence. She has probably advised you ere this of my dernier resort, and should it meet—as very likely it may—with your most cordial disapprobation, don't waste rhetoric or ammunition on me, my flag is nailed to the mast, but try and persuade "the world and his wife," to adopt the Quaker, or Russian custom, and dispense with all superfluous prefixes to proper names. For really there is no more absolute necessity of having titles to discriminate between *Madame* the matron, and *Mademoiselle* the "Lay nun," than *Monsieur* Benedict the bachelor, and *Monsieur*\* Benedict the married man. Indeed I don't see that they are of any use, except as safety-valves for vulgar curiosity and impertinence. And sure enough some people might get overcharged to a dangerous extent, if they couldn't bore every unlucky widow, or deserted wife they met, with a regular catechism about her husband and children, and the reason why she didn't marry again; and then turn round and remind some quiet unoffending spinster (like your cousin

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\* Do, in mercy to all "ears polite," learn (if you have not done so already) to pronounce this word and its plural *Messieurs* correctly, *i. e.* *Mos-yai* and *Mes-yai*, not *monster*, nor *Moo-soo*, nor *Mon-soon*, nor anything of the sort. If *au fait* to this matter, you will excuse this flippancy, if not, here is one lesson gratis.

“Mel” for instance) that *she* is old and ugly, and *her* chance quite hopeless now, by “WONDERING *how* it *happened* that such an extraordinary beauty as she *must have been*, didn’t get married when she was young and pretty.” Just as if *they* had any right to make it incumbent on a lady, either to retort rudely, “sin her poor miserable before breakfast” (or after), by the invention of all manner of “white lies,” or go into a history of her whole lifetime for their edification; or as if no woman had ever anything else to do but “fall in love” and “*get married*,” because men sometimes make themselves ridiculous, and spend their time talking about *her* beauty, when they had much better be saying their own prayers. The poor, conceited jackanapes, if they need nothing else, I’m sure most of them need pray long and well for sense enough to *let the dead rest!* And they’d be clear enough too, of evoking some shades of the past, if they only knew what awkward, insignificant, ill-favored, unmistakable “clods of marl” they looked in comparison. But not they! *ciel* what *atrocite merveilleuse* that any living mortal, “guilty of being suspected” of having had beauty, shouldn’t have made it over in hot haste, and with many thanks, to the first enterprising Procrustes willing to charge himself with its destruction in the shortest possible time. It’s “*a wonder*,” they suffer such culprits to run at large instead of arraigning them for *lese majeste* against the whole masculine gender; but *exeunt omnes* all ye pestilent pestiferi!

And now, if you don’t find your vocabulary sufficiently “aired,” just go out and declaim, as long as the gag law will let you, to the first drowning man you meet, on the folly and utter inutility of grasping at



“straws!” Then *leave* croaking to spectacled wisecracks who fancy they know pretty much all that is to be known, and can’t perhaps tell how many bars there are in the grate they have been punching for the last twenty years. How extremely sagacious they look, don’t they, standing high and dry upon shore, discoursing to the poor wretch in the water, about the *fallacy* and *weakness* of such injudicious efforts; but between you and me, don’t you think it would be just as humane to throw the poor fellow a rope?

Not however, that I expect anything of the sort in this instance; but would merely suggest that you make a better investment of oratorical capital, than to bestow it upon me: and finally, that you console yourself with the reflection, that it isn’t *your* name after all—nor that of any one else now extant—that is liable to be staled in the mouths of men by such an association. No, no, I cannot afford that, while my present position is so precarious, and there is *no alternative* but *beggary* or *success* in perspective. So the world and “all the rest of mankind,” must hold me excused if I “keep in the line of safe precedents,” and manufacture one of my own—mine by right of invention, and quite good enough for steamboat and newspaper use—or failing to get up anything sufficiently *recherche*, conclude to patronize the Phonetics, who once did me the honor to enroll my obsolete name—obsolete at least till I can resume it without compromising its dignity—in their list of celebrities.

They didn’t send me the book to be sure, no more they didn’t any one else, that ever I could learn; but there’s no occasion to remember that you know, and when honors are scarce, it is necessary for us, “small fry,”

to be thankful for a little and make the most of what we can get; so you can mail *the first* of the series you owe me for this, to New Orleans, and direct as usual until further orders.

Your ill-starred, but

Affectionate cousin.

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### LETTER XVIII.

PERSONALITIES AND MATTERS AND THINGS IN GENERAL.

—, *La.*, Jan. 2d, 1851.

DEAR CLARA:

I HAVE at last sealed and dispatched to your brother just such another pack and parcel of "lengthened sage advices," as a youthful tyro like him might expect from a veteran statesman like myself. You know the measure of his endurance best; but in newspaper parlance, don't you expect to "*catch a few*" for having instigated such a proceeding? Perhaps though he may "be merciful and spare," if you submit with all due deference to the penance of my suggestion; so by way of giving you a little preliminary practice, I have just opened a new ream, and there's no telling how much of it you may have to pay postage upon.

But verily "republics *are* ungrateful;" here am I now, and cannot find that there has ever been the slightest notice taken of my extraordinary efforts to enhance the postal income. If Sir Walter Scott was knighted, as the story goes, for increasing the revenue on paper, why should not an humble individual like myself be

pensioned for its consumption, more especially when it enures so much to the benefit of the Fifth Department, not to mention the mercantile and manufacturing interests?

Tell the counselor that if he really does intend speechifying to "Buncombe" in future, he might as well begin by calling attention to this subject. It will do just as well by way of practice as any other, and be quite as sensible as most "able discussions." Though, for that matter, I could suggest one or two more, just to let the Lieges know that we, their lawful Suzeraines, might, perhaps, furnish the William Pitt *point d'appui*, should they ever get enmeshed head and ears in metaphysics, yet fear to "*fall back on plain common sense*," from a very rational apprehension of having to measure the entire distance from bathos down *a la* Rochester.\*

And this, may it please their wisdoms, isn't altogether vain-glorious boasting, for we haven't so entirely taken leave of our senses yet, that they can palm off on our easy faith and "all enduring" good nature, such ultra-agrarianism as they have grafted into the laws of the land under the specious names of patent and copyright laws, and we never the wiser. The brain is as much a part of the human system as the hand, and its product a property or it is not a property—its possession a *right* or not a right. If *not* a *property*, then it clearly belongs to the originator, for *nothing* has been his property for ages; but only to think now of our Brother Jonathan, *he*, of all men alive, to waste the marketable

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\* The "wicked and witty" once inquired, in the mines of Cornwall, "What, your Reverence, may be the distance from the bottom of that shaft to the center of the infernal region?" and was told, "It can't be far my lord, just let go that rope and you'll be there directly!"

commodity of legislation in alienating an impalpable, valueless abstraction. Isn't it a little too ridiculous? If it *is* a property there must be a *fee simple somewhere*, and if it does not determine *per se* in the producer, then all good citizens should rise *en masse* against the high-handed tyranny that allows him to usurp its rights and privileges a single hour. It's modest though, to the shameless and unblushing favoritism of *some* radicals, who impudently insist "that a man *should* be allowed the use of what he can make for the *whole* of his own natural life;" and not half so bad as sheltering with their ægis an unholy alliance of publishers, paper and spectacle makers, if not actually "aiding and abetting" their nefarious designs and sinister practices, lest some heads and eyes in these thirty-one independent, conglomerate Republics should eventually get strong enough to supervise their own misdoings. They are every one "art and part," it's my belief, ("our publishers" always excepted of course, like every man's doctor and lawyer,) though little do I care personally for all their barbarous machinations and conspiracies. Thanks be, I can see my way pretty well yet, and by moonlight if I choose, through all the hocus pocus of the wicked-looking little atoms, that I take to be neither more nor less than enchanted souls of missing conspirators, for every one of the hard, contracted, leaden-headed impracticabilities looks as if it had been in a collapsed stage of the cholera, fed on persimmons, lodged in a condenser, and dressed in straight-jackets ever since it was born; but that doesn't prove that other people never need glasses long before they are able to buy or old enough to wear them, nor that it isn't very sad to see the light all go out of "childhood's sunny eye," as the first glance at the long, intri-

cate columns, and dim, misty leaves of the NEW BOOK, deciphers nothing half so clearly as a *headache in every page*.

Aside from starving to death, (very magnanimously,) for the benefit, honor and glory of epitaph and monument-makers, *authors* were undoubtedly sent into the world to illustrate the old Greek fable of Polyphemus, *strong and blind*, and having been caught napping by that dirty loafer, the right-royally rascal, Ulysses, half deserve to enact Issachar to the end of time; but were the wily rogue disposed, (as it seems he is,) to bore out the eyes of all the flock too, nobody would ever dream of holding the captive giant at all responsible! So I hereby notify all whom it may concern, that when I memorialize, or draft a bill for the better protection of the potentates and all the young princes, there will be one proviso, making it the duty of all health officers, and other local authorities, to seize, wherever they may be found, and burn, without fear or favor, all such pernicious and contraband wares, as books for adults having more than one-twentieth part in *as small* type as large Brevier, and another declaring the use, sale or issue of a text-book in anything *less* than Small Pica, (with notes and questions in Long Primer,) constructive assault and battery on the whole rising generation, and punishable by confiscation, fine, and imprisonment.

Abolishing from henceforth nine-tenths of Brevier and *all* smaller types would unquestionably be much simpler and more efficacious; but there being a certain class of deeds, as well as doers, having a natural affinity for the *clair obscur*—and not too much of the *clair* either—it would be necessary to reserve them for the accommodation of quacks, politicians, legislators, and others who

often wish to print what they know isn't fit to be seen. They of course will show their gratitude by putting all bright eyes and sunny faces, as well as authors' brains, in their own pockets, if they can, and there's nothing to hinder, that I see, but "eternal vigilance." Were *men* ever known, (*out* of novels, or *in* more than one,) to yield the "eleven points in law" to *one* in justice, or was there the least chance of the "plaintiff in error's" *recovering* in the new suit of Sarcenet versus Broadcloth, I should expect, despite Mr. Marcy and his aphorism, to come in, while "the victors" were all overjoyed and out of breath, for a goodly share of the "spoils." *As it is*, I fear the statute book, poor thing, will never be much the better for my ability to string words together as long as any Solon of them all; and what is worse that I shall never get the floor to rise *selon de regle* and *expose my condition*, just as if the lion didn't *know* there was some pestilent gallinipper, or disgusting little insect or other, (too small perhaps for an ordinary microscope,) buzzing, cavorting, and cutting all manner of antics about his mane; but there is no help for it that I see, so even that pension prayer will have to be preferred by other hands.

I believe though, upon "sober second thought," that I will have it claimed as indemnity. They honestly owe it to me, for having destroyed *my* prospects with the fortunes, (not to say lives,) of some of my friends by their wretched legislation. I don't exactly say which it might seem invidious, but you know very well to what I allude, and may well exclaim in reference to this, "would to God the mischief had ended here;" for, incredible as it may seem, some have absolutely taken the matter so

much to heart that their memories and eyesight have been failing ever since, in a manner most distressing to behold! Nor is that all, for sundry rich old plethorics throughout the land have actually been known to fatigue themselves by "doing the civil" to some waning star, much to the regret of all humane observers of their very magnanimous though superfluous condescension. But it's no use talking: some people *will* martyrize themselves to their own excessive amiability, though, to a feeling mind, nothing can be more truly painful than witnessing this self-imposed torture, unless it be seeing one of these same devotees *hold on*, with such a death-grip, to every fraction of the "almighty dollar," that the poor, unlucky dimes may be heard shrieking and groaning all over the country like so many fiends in torment, and yet delude himself into the belief that he really has a soul, and, perhaps, feel uneasy (for a moment or two nearly every year of his life,) about the future well-being of that nonentity. What a vagary! Not but that some people do have souls, others intellects, and others again neither; but, my dear sir, don't worry *yourself* in the least—your *divinia* (if you have any) is nothing in the world but a gnome! What's that you say? "Twinges of conscience!" O hush, man! hush! people will think you have the gout if you talk of twinges, though I dare say it's only the dyspepsia. But "conscience" indeed! Now, what did ever put it into your head that you had one? I'm sure nobody ever suspected you; and even his reverence here can tell you that when St. James speaks of visiting the "fatherless and widows in their affliction," he only means such as can return the call in their own car-

riages; so do sit down and be quiet, will you, or just go about your business. I have no patience with this tiresome old world sentimentality!

In the meantime, I dare say "a summer at the North would be *very refreshing*," in more ways than one; and, perhaps, I may come, for I hear that Barnum, that prince of curiosity mongers, "has been in full chase after a woman ever since that genus was superseded by the tribe *ladies*," and think of setting up my pretensions when the Lindomania is over. So, *success to merit*, for I neither object to the use nor application of the term, and retain several other antediluvian ideas and prejudices, which would, no doubt, if properly investigated, entitle me to rank high as a real, living, *bona fide* specimen of the obsolete race.

But wouldn't I cut a pretty figure in New York upper-tendom? I think I see myself now, sitting in a corner, with my finger in my mouth, trying in vain to catch the *role* of conversation, and wondering how long it would take all those lambent rays to travel down our way. Well, we of the South-West *are* a great people; that's past all dispute! For can't we patronize circuses, showmen, traveling theatricals and mountebanks of all descriptions extensively, support "the almighty dance" genteelly, and contribute to any and every thing that appeals to either or the whole of our "siventeen sinses" very liberally? To be sure we can; and, what's more, we prefer metallic refrigerators, and are not callous and cold like you of the frozen North, but "open as day to melting charity," whenever the misery becomes sufficiently abject and squalid to pain our visual nerves, otherwise we don't exactly see the necessity; but, as to making an effort to prevent it's coming to that pass, or



risking the *loan* of a dollar to avert the bitter humiliation of present dependence, or galling apprehension of future want: why, the very idea would be preposterous! Who cares to help people who will try to help themselves? If too proud to accept charity, let them suffer! We are not *Rasselas'* mad astronomer; it isn't our province to regulate the affairs of the universe! But we can take the first honors in *lionizing*, if not endued with your patronizing genius; and there's a two-fold advantage in that, for it saves abundance of "street-yarn," good breath, bad shoe-leather and equivocal gratitude, and spares much and very irksome annoyance to all wayward eccentrics having no taste for becoming grand levers of sensation. So, each to his own vocation: *you* rather shine in transcendentials; the present and tangible is our forte. Sympathy being a costly and somewhat volatile article, we don't keep much ready bottled for exportation, though we do occasionally improvise a little for home consumption. But then we are too economical by far to subscribe to anything more than the nearest seven-by-nine political hebdomadal, and, perhaps, a magazine or lady's book now and then, just for the sake of pictures and fashion plates. As for such lumber as LIBRARIES, *where's the use?*—who's got time to read them? So, if the chances of travel or fluctuations of trade happen, at long intervals, to waft us a new publication or fragmentary beam from the far-off world of literature, "we bless our stars, and think it lucky;" and should some six or seven months later bring us another God-send, we seize the straggling waif, as if "man need no more to bless himself withal!"

But, then, there isn't the slightest occasion for you to

put on any airs of superior wisdom, if you do labor under such a perfect plethora of intelligence that it would be dangerous to check its flow a single instant, (judging from the dignified and condescending forbearance and profound resignation which most new comers assume whenever an "older settler" attempts to slip in a word "edgewise;") for don't *you* know we lavish untold sums on our "rising hopes," sending them to colleges, academies, seminaries and institutes by the dozen, till they are elegantly educated—their feet and fingers more particularly;—and don't *we* know they are plenty smart and abundantly able to get their "knowledge-boxes" *so full* by the time they are fifteen or sixteen, that they never need look in a book again for the balance of their natural lives, unless it be one of those delectable little "yellow kivers" so opportunely scattered up and down the country to prevent people's forgetting their A-B-C's. Indeed, it isn't surprising you all should wax jealous and wish to overturn our institution; for it's enough to make you feel spiteful, just to think how you, on the contrary, have to go on, from year to year, adding "line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little, and there a little"—plodding away till you get old enough for great-grandmothers, that is, five-and-forty, or thereabouts.—Really, you are much to be pitied! But, O fie! I am quite ashamed of you: you don't seem to have the least idea how beautifully our high-pressure system operates; and, of course, you can't be expected to know how *la belle Angele* will ring in New Orleans!"

Not much, I opine, unless she is far more frisky or coquettish than usual, or has considerable wealth (or the reputation of it) to neutralize the effect of her Northern birth and manner. I might as well have

said defect, for such it is getting more and more to be considered, thanks to your half-fool, half-crazy Abolitionists, who ought to be put in straight-jackets, every soul of them, and kept on bread and water, and precious little of it, till they would condescend to come to their senses and mind their own business. This charity that is always looking abroad, and never beginning at home, is very apt, like other idle, mischief-making gad-about, to fall into disrepute in both quarters. And, as for slavery, don't listen a word to anybody that says it isn't demoralizing: it is undoubtedly the very spawn of that old imp, Legion; for if it doesn't seduce a man into spending money when he ought to make it, and a hundred other enormities, is sure to help him "compound for sins he feels inclined to, by damning those he has no mind to!" However, there's hope of the world yet: I look to see it improve very shortly, now that modern improvement has converted the "beam" in everybody's eye into a telescope, so that we can all turn our attention to redressing grievances at a distance. I'm "*only a passenger*," but don't mean to back out of my share, you see.

What I mean by the "*manner*" is, that there is something too staid, or too little "*Missish*" about a genuine Northern *lady*—too little advancing to attract and retiring to be pursued," to render her very fascinating here. And that isn't the worst: this quiet, uniform dignity and queen-like self-possession rather excite suspicion of more mature age than probably belongs to her of right; and when this surmise has once crossed the brain, it is stereotyped there as unalterably as "the laws of the Medes and Persians," and not the beauty of Venus or the face of a Hebe could ever efface the impression.

Or, rather, people not accustomed to appreciate any but the beauty of extreme youth, never trouble themselves to look for it where the latter is supposed to be wanting. So, to all available purposes, the real or imaginary *passee* might as well be a fright as a beauty; and rather more so, according to a quizzical old friend of mine, who used to aver, "that, there being more bad tastes than good in the world, a plain woman would stand a chance to be thought *pretty* much oftener than if she actually were so;" from all of which you will infer that, unless the lady in question differs materially from most high-bred Northern importations, I see no special necessity for any of her old admirers going into spasmodics or making themselves ultra ridiculous about the matter, any way, until the season is over, or so long, at least, as Divinity's abroad and mortality safe in its own insignificance.

But why, upon earth, don't Prince Humbug and King Magic put their heads together, and show up, to an admiring world, our whole American populace harnessing itself to the triumphal car of some transatlantic notoriety? Wouldn't it be delighted to see how the doors of too many of the wisest and best, even, in the high places of the land, fly open to a foreign actress or aventurice, and close almost hermetically to indigenious talent, *equal, perhaps, in degree*, though different in order, and developed in the less conspicuous (and therefore more truly dignified and appropriate,) departments of woman's sphere? And haven't we a right to boast all the time, and more too, of a country able to guard the distinction between virtue and vice so jealously, while holding out a general amnesty to the *faux pas* and "*escapades*" of an imported stale in one hand, and inflicting, with the other, the direst vengeance of outraged

morality on some fair, frail, fallen sister? Of course we have, so being good as we are great, can now afford to be just as well as generous and never name the advent of an Essler, or any other *danseuse* in the same age with the present avatar; for what right-minded, high-hearted woman but must rejoice in the fair name and fair fame of this glory-brightened sister-woman? Who would pluck a single leaf from her laurel or darken its splendor with the dream of a shade? Yet who would not gladly see her volunteer Boswells, unpensioned toadies, and merciless panegyrists—half our Dailies and *Weak-lies* in short—brought back to common sense, and our countrymen to their senses?

She, is no doubt estimable as she is gifted; but were she instead the degraded cast off leman of every royal *roue* in Europe, who does not know, or at least have reason to fear, that it would make very little difference in her reception? None the less for that would all the lead and antimony in the country feel bound to put themselves in commotion and lead off in most astonishing paragraphs, sufficient one would think, to justify many an "anxious mamma" in taking out a commission for lunacy, or resorting to the same sanative process which the Virginia Esculapius found so efficacious in the case of his own volcanic tempered spouse.

There, now, we have committed ourselves, and the "lords" will never forgive us if we omit to say what that was. You see, "*we*" are going to be dignified and editorial a bit, just to show the world what it lost when we mistook our vocation and refused to practice awhile with the "devils" above before taking charge of the apes below; but as they are unquestionably much more addicted to getting up those moral pyrotechnics than

their "better halves," we merely advise the latter to keep perfectly cool on the appearance of the premonitory symptoms; and just summon a sufficient *posse comitatus* to seize the madman, shave his head, blister his pate, pour cold water down his back, apply mustard to his feet, leeches to his temples, put him in straight-jackets, and confine him to low diet and close quarters for several days after the paroxysm is over; treating him, in short, precisely like any other maniac of the first water, paying not the slightest attention to his own asseverations of perfect sanity, further than to reply, "Oh no, my dear, that can't be! *My* husband is a *gentleman*, I know he wouldn't give way to such childish ebullitions of insane fury and conduct in *this* shameful mannér if he wasn't perfectly deranged! You will be better by-and-by, love, (if you are only patient,) but I can't let you out yet, indeed I can't; you are quite delirious now, I do assure you, darling!"

There is no telling how many females might have been saved from a lunatic asylum by the judicious application of some such regimen in early life; but it's as palpable as day that many a wife and mother neglects her husband and son most culpably in this matter, till he comes at last to behave in the family circle, (and everywhere else, for that matter, where he can venture without getting his head broken for his pains,) more like a wild yager or snapping turtle in the hydrophobia, than a rational human being.

Now ladies, this is imprudent, very! *You* may be willing to pet and humor the precious bedlamite, and live in such constant tremor of apprehension that it's like taking your life in your hand every time you have to speak to him; but you can't expect the whole world to "walk

softly" before him, and impunity begets want of circumspection, and some day sweet little Moses Job might forget "the better part of valor," and flare up and show off before somebody besides helpless, unoffending women and children. And then there would be squibs and bowie-knives, and epigrams and sword-canes, and bullets, and rejoinders, and depositions, and all sorts of murderous instruments put in requisition; and all because you, in your mistaken kindness, suffered the small wound, which a skillful hand might have cicatrized, to spread, and inflame, and gangrene the whole moral and intellectual system, the "little cloud, no bigger than a man's hand," to darken and overshadow the whole domestic horizon, and pour out its black and bitter waters, "without let or hindrance," on your very hearthstone! Yet this is wrong, all wrong! Patience and gentleness, and meekness, and forbearance, are all very fine things and very well *in their place*; but when they serve to engender, strengthen and perpetuate an intolerable despotism, till the mailed hand never wearies in smiting the fallen, then they are *out of place*, and from virtues degenerate into positive weakness if not actual vice. And what man—or what petty tyrant rather—whose irascibility has not become a monomania admitting no lucid interval, but must occasionally feel his cheek tingle at the recollection of how futile have often been the best efforts of those whom, after all, he perhaps best loves, to throw the "mantle of charity" over his great, though despicable infirmity, and hide from the world the iron heel that never ceases to grind the perfume from the crushed rose,\* till there is neither blossom nor aroma longer to be found?

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\* See Deaf and Dumb Girl's definition of *Forgiveness*.

And yet we don't go in for a general revolt, concoct treason, instigate rebellion, and preach up insurrection by the wholesale. Not but that "womankind" has many and grievous wrongs that ought to be redressed, (or that a few magazines of pitch, turpentine, and saltpeter wouldn't be amply sufficient to set the entire solar system in a blaze,) but simply because we see no special use in throwing the whole spheres into consternation merely to strip off her fetters *one day*, when it's morally certain she'd "gather the links of the broken chain and fasten them proudly round her" before eve of the next. So instead of shouting, "MORE PRIVILEGE," we rather incline to lop off some of the usurped "*prerogative*," for honestly and soberly we never could see the necessity of her making, or suffering Plato's chickens to make, a bigger fool of herself than nature ever intended, merely because they are *delighted* with a chance to sneer at her for allowing them that privilege. No, nor why that old "wooden spoon," common law, should indulge a human *cone* in the perverse, childish freak of alienating her father's property from her father's grandchildren and bestowing it on those of some one, as foreign perhaps to his knowledge or good-will as from his blood and name, and then turn round, *all in the name of justice*, and string up high as Haman, send on his travels, or accommodate with private apartments in states' mansions gratis, any blundering *mal-adroit* human *biped*, guilty of *being caught* making love to his neighbor's strong box, or playing at the Merry Sherwood old game of "stand and deliver." It's monstrous *uneven-handed justice* at any rate, so a grand demonstration on a small scale is about all I have to propose.

Emollients are wasted on these chronic cases—the



Esculapian plan is excellent, but not always practicable, yet "Poison may, as Galen held, by counter poison be expelled." And when the distempered animal gets so exceedingly rabid that no one can feel safe, or breathe freely for a moment in his presence, and you can't tell for certain whether it was a raving hyena or common mad-dog drunk, that bit him, then good wife, sister, or mother, our honest opinion is, that it's your obvious and "bounden duty" to take the responsibility, "hold the mirror up to nature," show your own virus, snap your teeth, foam and froth at the mouth, and lead off in a startling exhibition of most frantic rage. Or, in other words, when you see, (and you'll not need to wait long,) that the steam is rising very fast and no mistake, make all haste and be the first to explode—it may be that the suddenness and fury of the concussion will shock the frenzied *malade* into his sober senses. "Yes, but *scenes* are so appalling and disgraceful!" Exactly so, and that's the very reason why audacity should succeed where servility fails. "Coals of fire" don't burn a salamander, give the reptile a full charge of electricity with a slight touch of galvanism, and then see.

Only once gather courage from desperation, cease licking the foot under which you writhe, turn upon power, beard the lion in his den, or rather the tiger in his lair, and, (there being no room to get worse,) the chances are that the fractious, insensate brute may, in process of time, become quite a respectable, well-behaved—bear. But oh, you'll never do it! and here's all this good breath—no, *ink*, for we wouldn't have *talked* that much at one time for all the wasps, hornets, and self-igniting lucifer matches in creation—*wasted* upon you for nothing! Well, it can't be helped; but

as long as critical investigation of the lusus called oneself, brings some outsiders, with the very best intentions of thinking just as well of themselves as the case will possibly admit, to the mortifying conclusion that they really have not any decided penchant for being kicked and cursed one minute and petted and blarneyed the next; its a great pity the effect of these interesting, racy, little *scenic domesticia* couldn't be patented for the exclusive use and benefit of those who have.

But a truce to common madmen, Lindomaniacs are all the rage just now. Look how

“ They rave, recite, and madden through the land!”

If any half-dozen of their effusions (taken consecutively) wouldn't thrown an ordinarily impressible mortal into a brain fever, then inflammatory diseases can't be contagious, that's certain. Indeed it's quite doubtful whether he could digest all the paradoxical and conflicting statements found in a single one, without feeling a slight stricture in the region of his gullibility—unless he happened to wear double “glorification specs” which would take him straight through at a single glance. But are the “sons” *nowhere* we should like to know, that all these lords of the tripod are thus laying aside composition sticks and cold water, and taking to opera-glasses and champagne with impunity? However, we can't waste any more time upon you, just now, *Messieurs les Typos*, so stand aside till your betters are served—divinity before humanity always.

And that's the reason why there's no place in the round world half so suitable as “Freedom's area,” for getting up tempests in teapots, canonizations, apotheoses, and such like moral phenomena, in the shortest possible time and most unexceptionable style; for every-

body knows we are the wisest, best, most virtuous, and enlightened nation under heaven, we have settled that question long ago to our own entire satisfaction. *Poor Artists* might, to be sure, prefer an arrangement which would divest them of animal wants a little sooner; but that sordid reflection never troubled Jenny Lind, who had, it seems, friends able to send her abroad to take music lessons in childhood. Stop, there's a mistake at the very first outset—"she made her own way in the world!" Oh she did, did she? It was quite fortunate for her then, that we did allow Europe to retain the initiative, and confer the preliminary degrees; and all owing to our being an age or two "behind the times," that we never heard before, that this same "nightingale of Sweden" ever did fly from the spires of Stockholm to the cross of Notre Dame, live upon insects, sip honey-dew, perch out of nights, and carol from the topmost twig of some umbrageous bough to admiring earth-worms below, as a bird of her prerogative had a most undoubted right. "How absurd, just as if a bird of song didn't have to have its callow days." And besides, she cuts no such ridiculous antics now that she's full-fledged, but behaves (and that's much to her credit) very like an ordinary mortal, and quite as modestly and sensibly as any body could while so sadly bored with all this vulgar parade and sycophaney. Well then, these facts and the habits of the nineteenth century altogether taken into consideration, it is rather probable that that trip to Paris cost money (not to mention personal protection), or if it didn't we should like to know, and may be stepping over ourselves some of these days. But *ex nihil nihil fit*, said the ancient heathen, and hard cash and bank notes are not *nothing*,

or we should have had our hands full long ago. And being *something*, as anybody may find to his cost if he attempts to appropriate, except in a legal way, more than belongs to him, the presumption is that they must have come from *somewhere*. She did not pour liquid gold from her throat in those days, and if she evolved it from "*her own self-sustaining powers*" in any other form, where was Barnum then, that we never heard of this astonishing peasant child, able to place herself under the first musical tuition of the age, *never* till she became a woman, and had undergone the first metempsychosis? But perhaps her parents sent her, though we shouldn't exactly infer it from the phrase "*alone and unaided.*" No indeed (and worse and worse, we shall never get through without those *specs*). "They were *poor*, quite poor, and owe their present competence to *her* talent and filial affection!" And suppose they didn't, who is going to admit that a Swedish peasant, or Russian serf could by any possibility of means, be any better off *in any respect* than our American yeomen, who often find it difficult, as everybody knows, to educate a child thirty or forty miles from home at an inexpensive country boarding-school? For what would all the "*free and enlightened*" do, if they couldn't have southern slaves, and "the down trodden vassals of European despotism" for safety-valves commensurate with the largest liberty of their own universal sympathy? Then, if *she* didn't, and they *couldn't* play the *divinia pecunia* on the occasion, who did? Somebody must, for to Paris she went, there's no getting round that fact; though there was no "*extraneous assistance*" in all that, of course not!

*Madame*, the vocalist however, sent her back with the injunction "not to open her mouth again to sing,

for three years." Her divinityship, be it remembered, was still in abeyance, for she hadn't touched "the shores of freedom" yet; but if the faithful insist notwithstanding, that she lived all that time on nectar and ambrosia, we promise to give in—misbelieving infidel that we are—just as soon as they demonstrate, past possibility of cavil, the ability of their own intellectuality and spirituality combined, to support vitality for a single month even. Till then, we shall have strong misgivings that her parents, or somebody else, must have contributed, partially or indirectly at least, to her support during that long probation; and *that*, according to Beaumarchais, was *something*, still there was "*no patronage*" there—oh none in the world.\*

But suppose the vulgar necessity of eating and drinking (not to mention the convenience of some little shelter and clothing in a climate as cold as that of Sweden), had actually compelled her to violate again and again that judicious restriction; or resort, for the miserable pittance of her daily bread, to some other avocation equally fatal to the full developement of that rare physical organization, on which her artistic excellence so eminently depends! What then had become of all her rich gift of genius? Where then had been this glorious child of song? *Gone*—crushed into the grave by the stern hand of poverty, that lays its fell gripe on the heartstrings, and wrings out the very life of life from the secret soul of existence. Or worse—chained down to menial toil, mid the undistinguished

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\* "You think yourself a great man, *M. le Comte*, because you are a *Grand Seigneur*, morbleu! It has cost me, a simple unit in the great mass, a greater expenditure of skill and judgment *to exist merely* than has been employed for these hundred years in governing all the Spains."

throng, her heart turned to gall, her very brain on fire with the recollection of what *might have been*, and the untold agony of that life-long-yearning, for the wild, free gush of that matchless minstrelsy, whose tones haunt all her sleeping and waking dreams; but must never, never thrill upon mortal ear. *That* is "where," that is "*what*," not only might, but *must* have been, what the unsealed records of eternity no doubt will show *has often been*, when there was no discriminating hand to shelter and protect the common, perhaps unsightly shell, while the unseen chrysolite within was working out its own peculiar idea of glory, and of beauty.

*She* was spared all this; yet she, we are gravely told, "*had no patronage*," and the Press and the drawing-room re-echo the tale, till the ear wearies of its flagitious dissonance. "*No patronage?*" Do men know what they are talking about, when asserting such nonsense as this? Do they not know, it is a burning insult (not of incense) to the idol *their* own hands have set up for the "many-headed monster" to bedin with its ostentatious homage of the hour? Do they not see, that it is virtually telling the crowned victor in life's warfare, "*what you have achieved* is so very little that we cannot possibly make you out a respectable pæan, without adding the ascription of all manner of impossibilities!"

But were their folly and impertinence all, they, and their absurd panegyrics and corollaries might pass. Unfortunately they are not—they are instinct with conceit—the very incarnation of ingratitude, a mocking insult to the generous and noble few who have "*done what they could*" to start the winner toward the goal! What if their offerings were simple and small, their efforts crude, or weak, and not always successful? Do

they deserve for that, to have them tossed back in derision, or taunted as nothing worth? The "widow's mite," the kindly word, the cheering tone, the *hoping love*, the *working zeal*, of some humble friend, some sister artist it may be, who had "the discerning of spirits," shall all these pass away and be forgotten "as a tale that is told," lest the "still small voice" say unto us—"go thou and do likewise?"

The diamond of genius cuts its trace in the future, the pearl of the soul leaves its record on high; for *soul* is loftier than intellect, and this it is, that enables men to contribute, not grudgingly, not ignorantly, but freely, "knowingly and advisedly," to the furtherance of a fortune and a fame destined ere long to o'ershadow their own. And shall not their deeds be remembered, aye and *recorded too*, on earth as well as in heaven. These are the men, these the women, but for whom many a benefactor and pride of his race had gone down, an idle dreamer, to the silent dust—sneered at in life, derided in death, insulted in the grave—his very name made "a by-word and jest" for all visionary scheming. All honor and glory to such—they are the Livingstons to Fulton, the Isabellas to Columbus; *RENOWN* is their *right*, why is it withheld?

"A nameless man amid a crowd  
 That thronged the daily mart,  
 Let fall a word of hope and love,  
 Unstudied from the heart:—  
 The deed was small, the issue great,  
 A transitory breath,  
 It raised a brother from the dust,  
 And saved a soul from death.  
 Oh deed, oh tone, oh word of love,  
 Oh thought at random cast,

Ye are but little at the first,  
But mighty at the last!"\*

And now, Mr. Penny-a-liner, we'll attend to your case. You sport the Irishman's coat of arms, (Ignorance and Impudence,) "with an air of great dagnity;" but when did you ever extend a helping-hand to a young aspirant, unless it was to help him off the track? We've an eye upon a niche in glory's temple that will suit you exactly, and no doubt but your sapience will become the pillory uncommonly well; yet stay, you don't deserve to be seen *anywhere* in the same cycloid with the aforementioned good company, so e'en go your ways, for a nice little mannikin as you are. *We* are not general reviewer, (though that's because our merits haven't got properly abroad yet,) so can afford to practice moderation, and there's no use, as somebody observes, "in breaking a butterfly on a wheel." No, nor of trying to stuff more than half a dozen sheets into one single envelope. So you can be reading these and praying for sunshine, for if it doesn't come, it's just as clear as "manifest destiny," (in cloudy weather,) that you will be very apt to get the remainder. *Mais nous verrons.*

PART SECOND—DATE THE 5TH.

Well, my dear, you do see, "it never rains but it pours," and this time it never has left off, though it's the first I ever knew but what did.

Answering your next question is very like telling tales out of school; but as I am a sort of outlaw that doesn't even count in the census for the last ten or fifteen years, I suppose it makes no difference what I say, and I *do* gene-

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\* See Charles Mackay's "Song of Life."



rally find people *very kind*, especially during the first sickness I have in any one family. But then they expect you'll have the grace to get well *or die*, (as a good Christian should,) and there being, unluckily, more tenacity than elasticity in my constitution, I, unfortunately, do neither; and when the crisis is past, and there is nothing the matter only you don't get well, they are apt to "wax weary in well doing."

For example: when you have once—after half a dozen different efforts, perhaps—achieved the exploit of dressing and getting down stairs, you may crawl up again "on all-fours"—not "choose any supper," have "no appetite for breakfast," and "care very little for dinner," for weeks together, before anybody seems to notice that you are not perfectly re-established; and if—as is very probable under such circumstances—you take a relapse, it is a most infallible signal for "the best servant" to be taken sick, or "out into the field," and the family to discover that they "are not *fixed* for taking boarders, and don't like to have people about them unless they can do them justice." The house, too, gets, all of a sudden, entirely too small for your accommodation, and, as you haven't grown any larger, the probability is, that *it* has become smaller—shrunk up, perhaps, in the night, like the old iron dungeon of Este, or crept off in part to the usual receptacle; for, wherever else "*a room*" may be wanting, you will be sure to find one in the mouth of the speaker on these occasions. Just then it happens to be recollected, too, that the "*very agreeable boarder*" was *originally* from the North—a fact which demonstrates her, *per se*, to be "ten times more trouble than ordinary:" of course, you can't wonder they "should prefer (though more for your sake

than their own,) that you should look you out another boarding-house."

This agreeable intimation, being an excellent sedative for a highly nervous and very sensitive invalid, is generally administered when compliance is utterly inexpedient, if not wholly impracticable; from whence I infer that it is either meant to elicit an advance upon existing prices, or as a pretty explicit hint that you are no longer to indulge in the hallucination that you have *some rights* merely because you happen to pay for them. The first being rarely optional with one compelled to live with the whole "heart, mind and soul," out on "committee of ways and means" how to make or save a picayune, submission to the second is the almost inevitable consequence; and thenceforth you are to recollect that you are there upon toleration, like some "poor relation" or unwelcome visitor who has protracted his stay beyond all reasonable bounds, and demean yourself accordingly. Find it perfectly convenient to sit on a trunk, write on a band-box, hold a candle in one hand, pen or needle in the other; use your scissors for snuffers, feet and fingers for tongs; "never ken it or care" if every fractured, jagged-edged cup, loose-handled knife, broken-tined fork, and brassy, dissipated old spoon on the premises, happen, by some strange fatality, invariably to fall to your share; nor feel the least surprised should your pitcher decamp without saying "by your leave"—your carpet and andirons (if ever you had any,) see fit to emigrate—your looking-glass, and other toilette accessories more purely personal, take to gadding, and feel deeply aggrieved by a hint to return—your "*uncannie*" tumbler, candlestick, inkstand, and other utensils, have the impertinence to make themselves invisible, *change*

*characters*, and commit all sorts of *diablerie* before your very face and eyes, and even your decent, well-behaved, good, honest, Christian-looking wash-bowl spirit itself off to parts unknown, or be transformed, "by wicked cantrip sleight," into a leaky, battered, rusty old basin, much addicted to *absenteeism*: for neither nor all of these things would be half so miraculous as the finding in your room all, or a majority even, of the articles named, in the very height of your palmiest days.

The not being "*fixed*" is a "true bill;" for the residue of the intimation, set that all down as so much moonshine or unalloyed rusticity; and, rest assured, the very atmosphere of our larger towns and villages is too polished, by far, to allow such excessive verdancy anything more than "short shrift" and speedy dissolution. Not but that a fair proportion of the more genteel families will, for a proper "*consideration*," do themselves the very great indignity to take a few boarders, merely to accommodate the public, *for the sake of company*, or out of special liking for the individual—just, for instance, as every superfluous feminine of the North invariably pilgrimates South, or West, *for the benefit of her health*, not "to seek her fortune," or hide her poverty and pride by any manner of means.

Half of them may, it is true, have little or no other means for keeping up their tables or toilettes, or perhaps both; but then they'd have you to know—they would, indeed—that it's a very great condescension for everybody in the South-West, themselves in particular, to take boarders at all; so you must expect to sue very humbly, walk very circumspectly, and pay very roundly for the privilege of sleeping—if sleep one of your humble

pretensions can—under a roof of such aristocratic “three pile glass” as theirs! It may *leak* a little, to be sure, though that’s neither here nor there; but, as to the compromise of dignity, it strikes me, that, if mine were of that ephemeral, mushroom cast, that vanishes before the first sunshine of utility, I should make shipwreck of the whole concern, and commence *de novo*. For the rest—is it not a pity, that, when people do actually do you a favor, they will *not* allow you to feel a little grateful, instead of annihilating their own claims and merging your gratitude in a painful sense obligation, by reminding you ever after of their own unexampled kindness and liberality, and your helplessness and dependence?

How any sensible person can subscribe to the absurd vagary, that Northern ladies *generally* make more troublesome boarders than Southern ones, I cannot, for the life of me, conceive, unless it is because the former *do sometimes* “do up” their own muslins and laces, make their own beds, sweep and dust their rooms, and keep their brushes, combs, washstands and dressing-tables (*alias* mantle-pieces) in order, which the latter seldom or never do when boarding out of their own family connection. Nor should any one of the others, unless ambitious of being considered “one of the family,” at the expense of officiating as universal convenience, unpensioned seamstress, and standing subject of aggression ever after. With you such a series of encroachments on gratuitous exertion might originate in avarice; here, I am inclined to think, it arises much oftener from a thoughtless unconsciousness or disregard of the peculiar value of time and effort to those who have little of either at their own disposal: but the result is the same, and the safest way is, to ignore everything that is passing

around you; know nothing, do nothing, and have it understood that your whole genius lies in saving stitches; for if you once suffer innate taste, good nature or love of order to betray you into neglecting your own health or personal affairs for the execution of various little, frivolous matters—constituting an aggregate for which a regular employee would expect (though you, of course, would not,) something more substantial than mere compliments in return—there is no more *otium cum dignitate* for you, though there may be such a thing as a “fugitive from labor” in the mind’s eye of others. And should you subsequently venture to aggravate defection, by expecting the same attention that others, who never raise a finger in like manner, receive for the same specific equivalent, the proceeding will, to a moral certainty, be ridiculed as a “putting on of airs,” if not resented as a downright imposition.

Yet, one might, reasonably enough, suppose that either of the afore-mentioned idiosyncracies—enuring, as it ultimately must, to the benefit of the mistress by the relief of her servants—ought to atone for a little extravagance in the use of cold water, especially when the consumer, as is often the case, helps herself. But you who were “to the manner born,” and have not, in all probability, mended your ways or rectified your opinions by a residence in the domains of her majesty, Queen Victoria, have no conception how eccentric, not to say improper, it is to persist in the whimsey that a pint of water *is* rather a limited allowance for a proper ablution, and disrelish the idea of having half a dozen pair of eyes watching every evolution of its progress, or your instinctive delicacy so often outraged by being hurst in upon, that you get at last to feel quite present-

able if only caught in one remove from a "birth-day suit." Some foreign travelers do, to be sure, complain of being not a little annoyed and restricted in these matters; but then, poor, ignorant, benighted-creatures, they can't be expected to know any better; though everybody in "*this* enlightened land" ought to know that there isn't the slightest occasion for us who live in these bilious climes, to be half as particular in preventing the reabsorption of poisonous exhalations as are the infatuated children of Aquarius who reside in colder regions.

Putting away their scissors, thimbles, bonnets, shawls, etc., is another exceptionality of the aforesaid; consequently, they are seldom or never accessory to getting up one of those "general carraras," in which the whole *posse* of "house-hands," assisted by a strong deputation from the kitchen, amuse themselves by the hour, in running over each other at every turn and corner, stirring up trunks, upsetting band-boxes, diving into "old clothes-nests," whirling drawers topsy-turvy, turning the whole house upside down and inside out, ransacking every hole and corner, and all to "*get up*" a mislaid glove or missing pocket-handkerchief!

To see the scene in all its glory, you should have my lord and master striding up and down between the house and carriage every five or ten minutes, looking "black as forty thunderbolts;" or, if he chance to be "one of your patient, all-enduring men," drawing himself up into the smallest possible compass, and keeping "out of harm's way" with most exemplary presence of mind, yet every now and then furtively eyeing the progress of the hurricane, with such "a laughing devil in his sneer," that the poor, half-crazed delinquent feels, for the mo-

ment, as if "hanging, drawing and quartering" would be a hundred thousand times too good for him!

*You* may chance to know that these grand *bouleversements* are not peculiar to *Southern* households, and *I* wouldn't, for the world, insinuate that they are matters of every-day occurrence even there; *only* that *I* believe *I have seen* something of the sort, and should infer, from the general effect, that *the absence of the habit which forms the primum mobile* ought, in common justice, to be considered a fair set-off against the enormity of requiring to have some small space where you can "commune with your own heart in your chamber, and be still"—some quiet retreat to which you can sometimes retire from the senseless clamor of idle tongues and the weary nothings of commonplace, and think your own thoughts, free from the galling surveillance of those everlasting human eyes, forever watching every flitting shade of expression, and taking away from your very soul all consciousness of security, all thought of secrecy—some little sanctuary, in short, from which you can occasionally venture to exclude all the world, and feel alone with yourself and your God!

If there is any other peculiarity in the exactions of a Northern boarder, I have been trying in vain, for the last fifteen years, to discover what it is, and presume the *extra trouble* must lie in the Southern lady's own utter inability to appreciate the feeling which makes *privacy* and free ablution *necessaries of life* to one born and educated farther North. The following anecdote will, better than anything else, illustrate the great disparity of idea and habit between the two on this point.

Some years since, when it took much longer to de-

scend "*La Belle Riviere*" than at present, (especially if filled with ice), I met a very pleasant party from the shores of the Chesapeake, and an equally agreeable lady, who was making her first egress from the refined and literary emporium of the Bay State. The first day all went on charmingly; but on the second, *Madame*, the Yengese, began to draw off perceptibly, and on each succeeding one to wax colder and colder. Believing that "murder will out," I said nothing; though having emerged from my own room just in time to witness her shocked and surprised looks, on finding the whole of the other party "*out in the public cabin, among strangers,*" going through, very deliberately, and with the utmost *nonchalance*, all the minutiae of a rather elaborate traveling toilette, of which "washing formed *one of the later and least considerable operations,*" I was not very much puzzled to divine the cause. Indeed, it was quite amusing to contrast the nervous apprehension with which *she* watched the folding-doors, lest any eye profane should chance to glance on beauties *too entirely unadorned* to suit *her* taste, with *their* manifest indifference to the passing and repassing of chambermaids, and their suffering the impatient steward to poke his head in every few minutes, and inquire "if the ladies were all ready," *just as unconcernedly* as if it were only a cloud passing over the face of the moon! About the third day, I think it was, mortal woman could stand it no longer; so she kindly drew me aside, to shield my youth and inexperience from further contamination, by imparting her "*deliberate conviction* that we had *unfortunately* fallen in company with a band of traveling courtesans!"

I believe she did, at last, admit that "there *might*,



possibly, be *physical purity* existing under such circumstances; but she was sure, *quite sure*, there could be no *real purity of thought*, where the natural and instinctive delicacy of woman was so grossly, wantonly, habitually, and even unconsciously outraged!" Perhaps she would have thought differently, had she known what an extensive list of words and phrases Southern ladies have interdicted for indelicacy, though I never *could see* wherein they were so much worse behaved than other English; and no doubt commit many an egregious and indecent blunder, from pure inability to recollect which of two synonymous expressions, is the tabooed term.

But "honor to whom honor," and according to the best of my belief, observation, and information *thus far*, no *southern born* female—and mind I don't say lady, for *ladies* are not addicted to such habits anywhere that I know of—ever outrages decorum as too many northern mothers often do, while nursing their infants in the presence of whoever may chance to look on, without ever seeming to suspect, what unspeakable felicity it would afford the spectator, to dash a whole bucketful of water upon them, by way of making them turn aside, or cover themselves up, for once at least, if not always convenient to leave the room on such an occasion. But no—there they sit, half naked, with the utmost composure, and never dream that they, and their children reared under such auspices, are not perfect models of refinement; and abundantly well qualified by a little book-learning to set up for censors of the manners, morals and customs of the South. Yet if there is one thing more intensely disgusting than another, it is, to see a great, greasy, swarthy-looking hag, or little

shriveled, dried up mummy of a thing, strip herself to the waist—or suffer some great calf of a yearling, whom any reasonable mortal would take for her grandchild, to do it for her—and leave her whole chest exposed to occupy the *hands* as well as mouth, of “*mother’s precious angel darling*,” while her own are busy patting and toying with its nakedness, just as if she thought herself, and the dirty, ugly, “regular tartar and brimstone” little wretch, perfect MODEL ARTISTS, and everybody else as fond as herself of such exhibitions. Pshaw! It’s worse, if possible, than seeing a great chuckle-head, amber-distillery, blear-eyed, blubber-lipped, unwieldy, porpoise of a man, or a bouncing, wheezing, if not skinny, rawboned, old witch of a woman, with a map of all the lines and angles of geometry in her face, “*billing and cooing*.” It’s a wonder to me, that nuisances of both classes don’t get shot down, or disappear by the dozens, in communities that encourage scavengers and tolerate whole hordes of rising young surgeons, who haven’t possessed themselves, as yet, of a “dear deceased” in their own right. Possibly the former may scoop up a nauseous excrescence now and then; but the latter always fail, it is presumed, in nerving themselves up to touching anything so intolerably loathsome even with the scalpel and dissecting-knife.

Be that as it may, and other things as they will, these remarks are none of the most delicate in the world—though all the more graphic for that, be it remembered—but that isn’t half so distressing as the reflection that both parties are evidently past all hope of reclamation. They of the north are entirely *too wise* to be instructed by anybody, though the very negroes here (Heaven

help the poor darky that ever falls into their hands) might teach them more modesty; and the reverse of that reason, makes the case equally hopeless on the other side. Here at the South, *men* (who must needs have all the sense in the world inasmuch as we women have none,) are vastly too knowing to take a hint from their better-halves in the construction of their domicils. So the latter have to go on from week to week and year to year, cramming all the "five corners of every room" full of beds, in which to stow away the whole household (the female portion of it I mean) whenever the conjugal hive swarms; that is, whenever the hopeful progeny gets too large—no, too *numerous*—for the whole to pack in with "Pa and Ma" any longer; and then, to mend the matter, cover all the intermediate space with pallets, every night, for negro women and children, boys and girls (some of the former large enough to count for men in the field), so that the little misses have to grow up from infancy to maturity, accustomed to dress, undress and expose themselves just as freely in their presence, as if they were so many cats and dogs.

Some far-off Physiologist does, to be sure, occasionally lift up his voice against the "*insalubrity*" of inhaling, during the hours of sleep, the fetid atmosphere generated by such promiscuous crowds;" but if you want to hear the *immorality* of the thing denounced, you must go with some "*dirty indecent novelist*" to a Parisian cellar or London garret, *we* are altogether too modest and virtuous to think of anything indecorous. And who shall *dare* to inquire, if it is *reasonable* to suppose that the inferior, whose animal passions may be strong in proportion as his intellects are weak, is always equally heedless? And if not, whether parents

and all others who perpetuate this custom, are not, indirectly at least, accessory to, and responsible for, *many* of those appalling occurrences, which usually terminate in the roasting beforehand, of some brutal wretch, for a nameless outrage on perhaps the wife, sister, or daughter of his own master? That such events occur so rarely, under existing circumstances, is, to me, an unanswerable argument in favor of the wide and irremediable disparity of race; that this barrier is sometimes overleaped, is I believe, owing more than men will like to admit, to the fact that husbands, fathers and brothers, have never once dreamed of placing that among the *possible contingencies*, that might result from their own mismanagement.

Southerners are not overmuch given, at best, to wasting any superfluous amount of time investigating the nature of cause and effect; and cannot of course be expected to do it now, when their whole souls would revolt from the conclusion, to which I honestly believe it would inevitably lead. Would they do so, I fancy we should soon see very different domestic and dormitorial arrangements; and a less universal habit of "putting on full steam," to make a little more cotton, to buy another negro to make a little more cotton, and so on *ad infinitum*; just for instance, as your humble servant compresses her lines more and more, on every page she attempts to trace.

I dare say you are asleep, so—

To Morpheus, my dear cousin.

LOUISE.

## DEMAND FOR A SONG.

*By one who assumed, in sport, to be JENNY LIND;  
and REPLY.*

A SONG for my lute that shall float on its chords,  
A measure all glowing with gladness and glee;  
A tone gushing out from the heart's sweetest wards,  
This, this is my tribute, oh minstrel, from thee.

No fear for the future, no accent of pain,  
No care for the present must sadden its tone;  
Youth, beauty and hope must e'en breathe in its strain,  
Like birds of bright plumage that upward have  
flown.

For my life is still young in its freshness and truth,  
And I deem that the future will aye be the same;  
Then weave me a song like the smile of my youth,  
To float on my lute, down the current of fame.

\* \* \* \* \*

Oh no—for I'm *old*, though the register tells  
Fewer lusters by far than are traced on my brow;  
And a voice from the past, ever silently swells  
The dirge of the hopes that are withered and low.

Then *wake not its tone*, for I shrink from the tread  
Of those echoless steps that are thronging the stair;  
The altered, the absent, the distant the dead—  
They are coming—all coming—and gathering there!

And the sigh of each leaf in the blossom of life,  
 As the petal was reft and flung to the breeze;  
 (Like the song of the swan, or the dolphin's last dyes  
 Appealing in anguish to winds and to seas);

It is moaning for aye in the wierd spirit's wail,  
 As mem'ry summons each ghost from the crowd  
 Of shadowless forms, that are strewing the gale  
 With the damp and the mildew that clings to the  
 shroud.

And my heart, life and lute all smell of its mold,  
 No ray of bright promise now cheers me along,  
 And my brow is not *all* that is careworn and old,  
 For no muse but deep sorrow presides o'er my song.

LEONA.

*Miss., Feb., 1851.*

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## LETTER XIX.

### SALMAGUNDI OF GOSSIP AND AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

*S——n, Miss., April, 1851.*

DEAR DORA:—

YOU will be surprised, though I trust not disagreeably so, at receiving, for the first time in your life, a line from your long wandering cousin.

I claim no special ovation for the gratuity, for when a culprit is sure to be detected, do what he will, he may as well "confess and be hanged" at once. And it is just possible, that but for circulating the inclosed, I might not have found time to write *quite so soon*; still

I have always intended doing so, ever since I knew that you too were far away from the home of your youth, and that one after another of your elder sisters had gone down, like nearly all I love, to the silent grave. Ignorance of your address, and the uncertainty of my own have hitherto deterred me; but thanks to uncle J——'s last, the former difficulty is now obviated—though you may feel no special gratitude therefor—and Clara tells me, you are a wife and mother. A happy one, I hope and trust; though I should not always have inferred it, quite as matter of course, from the fact that you had assumed the name, and with it, I hope, as much as may be, of the *feelings* of a mother, to several children not literally yours.

There is, I apprehend, something instinctively revolting, if not almost humiliating, in the very name of *second wife* or *step-mother*, and the office itself can be no sinecure, particularly here at the South where people are somewhat sensible, and consequently aware, how inadequate is a whole lifetime of self-abnegation and subservience to repair, to their children, the irreparable wrong of having exposed them to the sins and sorrows of this life, and the fearful uncertainties of the next; and it certainly *is* very hard atoning for injuries one has not committed, *yet on the whole*, playing *la belle mere* (how much softer and prettier is this than our coarse English phrase), to whatever number of "young hopefuls" may have the audacity to call any one man "*Father*," can scarce be worse than enacting step-mother *de facto* to all the dirty, ugly little wretches in community! And with the comfortable assurance too, as in my case, that by the time one set of the "varmints" has been caught and caged long enough to

be demi-civilized, they will have to be dispersed, and their *quondam* to pay as dearly for the respite as would Esop's Fox had his benevolent friend, the swallow, persisted in his humane intentions. The *stepping* may not be perfectly felicitous, especially if it happens, as I suppose it does once in a thousand years or so, to be *stepwife* as well as mother; but I do begin to think there is something a little ridiculous in the tenacity with which certain old friends of ours adhere to their primitive opinion, that it constitutes the crowning agony of all female martyrdom; my own private opinion ("publicly expressed") being that it consists either in "governessing," or being tied to some miserly, vulgar old fool, or contemptible sot.

Lady Teazle's reply to Sir Peter's taunt respecting her former position, namely: "that she recollected it distinctly, and a very disagreeable one it was," etc., is very *apropos*—to the general question I mean, not to your particular case, there I trust it may be wholly irrelevant; for you, I hope, never found shooting young ideas half so intolerably irksome as myself.

It is not the mere physical labor and confinement that render it so oppressive, though you in Old Virginia have no idea what a constitution of iron it requires even for that, here in the South-west; nor what uncommon effort and ability it demands to maintain the least ascendancy over the minds of pupils, where one half the parents are much like the aggrieved father, who had "been sending to school and paying out his money *for three whole years*, to have his son learn Latin, and *now*, he couldn't even do a sum in Simple Interest!" They, of course, are quite as apt to find fault when their children do well as when they do ill, a majority of the balance



don't care, or if they do, have all got in such a tremendous hurry, of late, that if it wasn't for the opportune invention of snags and steamboat explosions, death, poor fellow, might die of starvation, for all them, for he never could overtake them. And even the best disposed and more sensible, who don't exactly expect to outrun him, seem to think they are doing the cause of education good service if they only find time to *listen* pretty regularly to *ex parte* reports of each day's proceedings, instead of dropping in every now and then, impromptu, as they should, to evince interest, gratify curiosity, or make suggestions; but unfortunately they are much oftener training up idle and contemptible, if not captious and mischief-making gossips and busybodies. Probably they never reflect, when discussing all the *pros* and *cons* in each item of the daily budget *in the very presence of the carrier*, that they are virtually inviting him to sit in judgment, with them, on the personal and professional merits and demerits of his teacher; and that it is not in human nature for a judge to retain, very long, any profound respect for one daily arraigned at his bar: and consequently that they are doing their best, to destroy all that prestige of moral and intellectual superiority, on which the success of teaching so eminently depends.

Yet this is not all, for there is still the irresistible conviction that, struggle as you will, all freedom of thought, all independence of action, the very inborn rights of woman are gone, and your sex remembered only for the impunity it secures to insult and aggression; the knowledge that you are bound to succumb, body and soul, life and limb, to the caprices of an ill-sorted, ill-informed, conflicting and ever vacillating community;

that you are sold, past redemption, to a slavery, hopeless and helpless as the bondage of Siberian mines—that you have *no right* to think your own thoughts, or withhold the sacrifice of your own health or life, that you must forego all to which you cling, fritter away the freshness and sheen from each gem of beauty, and worth; temper “the thoughts that breathe, the words that burn,” to the dull, cold ear of stupidity; speak when you would be silent, act when you would think; tame down all lofty thought, all soaring fancy, all noble aspiration; crush out the soul’s deep thirst, its life-long yearning *for advance*, for *improvement*, and bind it down, with a chain of adamant, to the same “dull drudged lesson,” the endless iteration and reiteration of the same stale, puerile commonplace; and all for naught—*for naught*, for what is gold to compensate for such torture as this? And it is this, oh yes it is this; that sends so many highly-gifted and accomplished women, with better health and stronger nerves than mine, from the school-room to the mad-house.

Yet the world, in their wisdom, never dream that all is not well; *they* see no danger in forcing the o’ertasked brain to atone for the absence of all physical power, while the worn-out nerve is quivering with agony at the rustle of every leaf—nothing more remarkable than personal, or sectional eccentricity, in the stammering tongue, the imperfect or forgotten word, the half-formed, or reconstructed phrase, the wandering thought and indisposition, or inability to concentrate the reasoning faculties—the waning powers of self-control and consequent irrepressible and undignified exhibition of every passing emotion; the frequent and startling alternation from the deepest depression to the wildest and most unnatural

levity; oh no, they see no premonitory symptoms in all this; but when the fearful verdict "*insanity*" has once gone forth, O *then* they can "*remember*" to have seen "*long ago*"—in every independent act, every warm and generous feeling, every brilliant coruscation of wit and high poetic thought, that soared above the medium of their own cent-per-cent., matter-of-fact perceptions—"unmistakable indications" of alienated intellect! And even men, who *should be* physiologists, will not hesitate to assign as *cause* some trivial incident, which the veriest tyro ought to blush not to know, must have been the effect!

You may think I look altogether on the dark side; but if the picture ever had any bright one, I'm sure it must have been worn out before my day, for I never could find it, or, if I ever did, my experience for the last two years has entirely effaced the impression.

The first of these was spent a little North of Red river, in Arkansas; the second a little South of it, in Louisiana. In the former place I did achieve a whole five-months' session in the course of eight or nine; in the latter, I repeated the experiment, but failed most signally, after dragging, as I had often done before, my enfeebled frame, and tottering limbs and quivering nerves, to the scene of their daily torture, by literally crawling up stairs, or over stiles, like an infant, for weeks in succession. And very glad was I, eventually, to put long miles and broad rivers between me and the scene of so much mental and physical suffering, at the expense of a watch—the second disposed of for similar reasons within the last five years—intending, hereafter, to be as circumspect as was the steamboat captain, who, on being asked "if he ran up Red river," replied,

“No; that he intended to keep within the pale of civilization:” not but that I found some of the most agreeable people I ever did meet West of the Mississippi, (in Louisiana, more particularly;) but then they are too much like “angels’ visits, few and far between.”

Now, I flatter myself, I know precisely the feelings of an escaped galley-slave, balancing the horrors of impending starvation with the mortal agony of a compulsory return to his chain and his oar. And you see, by the inclosed,\* that the proverbial mischance of literary effort is henceforth the only “reed” on which I lean, to preserve me from perishing of want in a land whose applause falls in showers of gold on every species of talent that ministers to the corporeal senses! God only knows how I have toiled and suffered, how sternly and unflinchingly I have crucified all my native tastes and early habits, to avoid such a contingency as this; how, once and again, I have *almost* secured the means of obviating its occurrence, then been compelled to watch, in bitterness of spirit, as gold (the true sybilline leaf, that increases in value as it diminishes in proportion,) slowly, but surely, glided from my grasp, leaving me, on each recurring occasion, more helpless, homeless, destitute and desolate than ever.

Forgive me, should your mind chance to revert sadly, in future, to the position of one hitherto far removed, in all probability, by time and distance, from your thoughts and sympathies; for I would not willingly cast the shadow of my own evil doom over the brightness of your fairer destiny.

I have, as you are probably aware, resided for most

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\* Notice and Prospectus of this work.

of the last fifteen years in Tennessee—fifteen *centuries* more like it seems. I wonder what people *mean* when they say “time seems *so short*”; but it, to me, has lost much of its former charms; for the dear old Virginia lady, who *was* about the only mother I ever knew, had (with many of her beloved children,) gone away to her home in heaven before I left; so I concluded to arrange preliminaries in this state, partly because it was less expensive of access than one more remote, but more because I knew the Masonic fraternity (on whom I have a lien in right of my father,) to be unusually popular and extensive in Mississippi. Now don't faint, or turn pale in the least: I only design them—in case they are *sensible*—the honor of accepting their patronage and favorable auspices; but I'd like to see the first living mortal, stranger or relative, that would dare say “*Pensionnaire*” to me; though, if you chance to know any seventh-heaven clairvoyant, who can work his will unrestricted by time and space, I'll thank you to bespeak his good offices to the extent of making me insensible to the wants and weaknesses of poor, frail humanity, for some time to come. Cause why—a gold watch not being exactly a gold mine you know, its proceeds cannot be expected to last forever; and—it being one of the indefeasible properties of all great bodies *to move slow*—some of the worshipful members in the Empire State, who, according to the best of my recollection, were formerly nowise remarkable for developments of any kind, have of late become such inconceivably great men, that it wouldn't comport with their dignity at all to examine a record and make out a certificate within less than six or eight months after they had promised to do so half as many different times!

But what a blessed thing it is to be confiding—and pertinacious and tenacious, too, as any Senior Wrangler or the musk of a Yankee's self-conceit—for otherwise I might suspect that all the marvelous fine things reported, ever since I could remember, about the *prompt* and *efficient* attention always given, in case of need, to the representative of a deceased brother, must have happened during Munchausen's travels in Gulliver's Island, or away back in the dark ages, before the world had outgrown its baby-clothes and got beyond leading-strings. The urchin has cut his eye-teeth now though, and got quite shrewd enough, too, to fool himself, if not his Maker, into a belief of his own entire willingness to discharge all obligation, to the spirit and letter, while taking special good care to ignore its existence in every case possible. If, however, I find, upon better enlightenment—that is to say, when the mountain *has* come to Mahomet—that this compliment is private property, on which the grand circle, as a whole, have no rightful lien, I do hereby promise to make it over in *fee simple* to the original legatees instanter!\*

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\* Well, it is so assigned and secured—to the exclusion, at least, of the Mississippi segment—this day and date of the year of grace, fifty-one. And I do hope and trust I have found the exception at last, for I'm sure I never yet did love “a tree or flower but 'twas the first to fade away;” and, if decency didn't forbid, should expect the “ancient” and universal, immutable and inscrutable, to convert an “*open Sesame*” into a *bar-sinister* the moment it was seen in my hands. But, “*nous verrons,*” as Father Ritchie says.—*Vicksburg, Oct. 6.*

And, sure enough, they have, (I humbly ask pardon of all the other disfranchised therefor;) and then try to palaver, and “make believe” it's a mere matter of latitude, or some other vagary! I know better, if they don't: it's all owing to me, and nothing and nobody else; and it's astonishing how savans will keep groping in moonshine and electricity for solutions right under their nose, and palpable as

Aside from that accorded by the husband of an old friend, the most efficient aid given to my enterprise, thus far, has resulted from a casual rencontre with a young friend from De Soto, Louisiana; and there being no pretty sister, daughter, or niece in the case, his courtesy can be ascribed to nothing less than "the inborn chivalry" of a gentleman "to the manor born." So I say, God bless the Virginians, Kentuckians, and Carolinians, wherever they sojourn: they seem to have a noble and manly self-reliance on their own ability to recognize and appreciate rank and worth wherever it may be found, without extraneous aid. Perhaps it is from the electric thrill of some responsive chord within; for, sure I am, they exhibit far less than some others of that spirit which, by suspecting all, "*convicts at least one,*" if we may rely upon the testimony of that uncompromising moralist, Dr. Samuel Johnson: an *ipse dixit*, by-the-by, which I would most respectfully recommend to the consideration of those who seem never to have

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their own stupidity! I was, undoubtedly, Columbus in 1492; *that's why* the magnet turned from the Pole; and Sir John Franklin might have come home long ago, (half roasted to a cinder,) if "Government" had only set me up in the ice trade, instead of fitting out the Advance and Rescue, with that pestilent surgeon, who couldn't be easy till he'd got a pre-emption to disqualify and exclude all authors from *Terra Incog.*, as well as *log*—"bad luck to him." Not the first one of us now, can ever send a pair of nice young "lovyers" there to cool off their passion during the honeymoon, but he'll have somebody wrapping up their ears in old newspapers! And if I were to draw up a glowing description of the Palace, Park, Gardens, and Royal Demesnes of King Eidolon, in the last found Nebulæ, Uncle Sam would be certain to stick a Kane in it, and have it surveyed, and mapped, and geologized, and cantoned off into thriving young Republics, (modeled exactly on the pattern of Brother Jonathan's,) long before I could find a publisher discerning enough to appreciate the work. "Everything *con-TRA-ries* me,"—what shall I do?—*Lexington, 1852.*

properly digested St. Paul's sententious lecture on good morals and good manners, namely, "Let no man think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but each esteem another better than himself."

Speaking of Dr. Johnson, reminds me that a reputed relative of his was the last teacher of my acquaintance sent to the lunatic asylum; but do not understand me to insinuate that I think the possession of any commendable quality restricted to the natives of any particular section. Such an idea, beside being manifestly absurd, would be extremely unjust to many of my best and dearest friends; all I mean is, that whenever I find pretty nearly my *beau ideal* of a perfect lady or gentleman, I am also very apt to find, soon or late, that the individual was, in a great majority of instances, originally from one or the other of the States above-mentioned.

Now, don't betake yourself forthwith to the presence of your loving *caro*—to whom, nevertheless, present my cousinly compliments—that is, if you think proper; for I dare say he is very much like the residue of lords paramount, sufficiently addicted to taking airs of various kinds upon himself any way, and might fancy I had cooked up this nice little dish of "blarney" for his special delectation, (or more probable disgust,) or intended it as an ironical hit at the palpable *parvenuism* of the F. F. V. assumption. Either would be wide of the mark, though I do think it a pity we can't have some of the aforesaid statesmen to modify the character of the pretty Chinese colony in this vicinity, and don't think it would be much amiss for the next legislature, after they have affiliated Mexico, annexed Cuba, and dissolved the Union—and it seems just now as if they



were not like to lack provocation to do either, or all, if they could—to wind up by conferring a new name on the shire town of Madison; for *Canton* is well known to be a free port, and these celestials are in no danger of entertaining “angels unawares.”

I made their town my original place of destination, little dreaming that with “letters” to prominent citizens, I should be unable to secure a temporary home among “*the generous, warm-hearted Mississippians*,” of whom I had so often heard—so long at least as I had means to pay for it—but it seems I reckoned for once without my host. I don’t mean “mine host” of the hotel, who, I do suspect, has somehow stumbled on that anomalous piece of antiquity, denominated the Golden Rule; though I hope the incident will never transpire to the injury of his reputation for ordinary *savoir faire* among his own fellow-townsmen.

As for these, their houses *looked* very much as if constructed of the usual *materiel*; but we all know how ingenious are the nephews and nieces of the “Sun and Moon;” and no doubt it was all a sham, and they were every one India-rubber, made to expand or contract at pleasure. Provisions, too, rose most astonishingly in the market—don’t you think the dealers ought to patronize me extensively therefor—so, though no cormorant, I was fain to decamp; and should the chances and changes of life ever call me to the Celestial Empire again, shall announce myself as the identical Mrs. Ann Royal, redivivus, (she is dead is she not?) who once held the good city of Washington and the sovereigns’ viceroys in such commendable awe.

Possibly they didn’t relish the idea of having “a chiel among them takin’ notes;” but “fa’t’h I’ll prent

them," though sure to get nothing but "*particular jessy*" for my pains. Perhaps you don't appreciate the graphic elegance of this ominous Southwesternism; but it means, I take it, graduating through a course of "sprouts," with a few extra touches by way of diploma.

I don't charge much for this contribution to slang dictionary, but expect the unbounded gratitude of all critics for the choice *bonnes bouches* provided for their delectation. Much joy do I wish them of their dainty repast, and a nice time they will have of it; for here have I been these dozen years sharpening myself up into vulnerable points all over, for their better convenience, and there's only one little drawback to their promised "feast of fat things." I've grown so exceedingly thin during the process, that unless they are capital sharpshooters, there is some little danger of missing the mark. But they have only to follow the directions of the renowned Mrs. Glass, "*first catch the game,*" and then there's nothing to do but hash and slash, and baste and broil to their heart's content; for here's plenty of *sauce malapert* already prepared to their hands.

So just set to, Mr. Dennis; we of the South don't stand for trifles, and ought to be very proud of your notice, if it does come in the form of a castigation. And when you get us tamed down to the polished level of your own elegant commonplace, there will be another splendid chance to show off, by declaiming about "the want of the beauty of the fitness of things;" and we wouldn't miss that diatribe upon any account, and hope you'll remember it takes a *great deal* of attic salt to keep some things from spoiling! "Just as a friend, though," we'd advise you not to make too heavy a run upon your vituperative epithets at the first dash; not

that there's the slightest danger of the stock's giving out, but because so many crabbed, ugly words might be hard to swallow, in case you had to "*crawfish*," (there's another *ism* for you,) as Jeffries did after Byron lashed him into good behavior. And beside, it must be provoking, very, to see how some wrong-headed, contumelious, self-witted authors, (like Dickens, for example,) e'en *will* go on publishing despite your fatherly admonitions and remonstrances; and how the world *just will* go on reading—hardly stopping long enough to say, "I wonder you will be talking there, Signor—nobody marks you"—till, finally, you have to stuff your wise critique in your own pocket, and chime in with the undiscerning vulgar, just as if you really had caught, at last, some little faint echo of "that music to whose tone the common pulse of man keeps time;" though you know very well, all the while, that it's a great deal more like the melody of an imprisoned porker than the "music of the spheres."

Now, this may be a very shameless and unblushing avowal of bad taste, deserving the knout, bastinado, decapitation, and all sorts of refined, delicate penance befitting the Procrustes of high literati to inflict; however, the tiara is "at discount now," so I don't mind confessing—all "under the rose," you know—that really I am not infallible, have been mistaken in the course of my life, didn't always know "the cow would eat up the grindstone," and don't always feel as much like anathematizing these vernacular *mesalliances*, as a regular offset of "Rose, Thistle, and Shamrock" should. Most Mississippi-valley-isms, like all other *isms*—cockneyisms in particular—are, to be sure, silly, pointless, low-lived and disgusting, beyond the power of legitimate adjec-

tives to express; but that they are, without exception, like the old lady's "baeker-spittin' beaux, ALL 'bominable, 'bominabler, 'bominablest," I, for one, beg leave to deny. There is, now and then, one, evincing so much rapidity of combination, raciness and vigor of thought, that, to my ear at least, is far less grating than the eternal "hadn't oughts" and "said he's" and "said I's," by which some who arrogate "those seats on high" rarely fail, "*I guess*," to betray their Blue-Law origin and Pilgrim culture, long after they have turned their backs upon Down-East and adventurized toward the setting sun. But then, you know, I always was rather restive under the arbitrary, nonsensical and ever-shifting exactions of etiquette; and now, am just poet, cynic, censor or savage enough to laugh or sneer more than ever at the arduous and transparent humbuggery of highly artificial life. And if there is one pretension I do detest more than another, it is the affectation of would-be gentility and sentimentality, or the overstrained fastidiousness of personal, social or literary sybarism.

But, avaunt, ye horrors, "gorgons, and chimeras dire;" and—mercy on us, what an episode! Fortunately, you understand "the laws and statutes in such cases made and provided" too well to expect any apology for a diversion allowed to pastoral, didactic and other prosy writers, (though, really, I did forget you were not Evelyn or Clara;) but, *n'importe*, I shall go on all the same, for it has just struck me how materially I have derogated from the dignity of a certain "*city*" by calling it a town. It was, for a long time, a great mystery to me why every little village here in the South-West should voluntarily encumber itself with onerous

corporation expenses ; but I know now: it's because everybody knows that everybody lacks time, energy or public spirit enough to keep the highways and byways in his own immediate vicinity wholesome and passable, unless backed by the stringent ordinations of a regular board of police. They do threaten that city (and even this more remotely and indirectly,) with a railroad ; and there is so much interest expressed on the subject just now, that I shouldn't much wonder if, in process of time, they accomplished the object—of getting a charter; after which the fever will, it is presumed, prove an intermittent, as usual, so that the China-wares and Hyads and Dryads need apprehend no further danger.

Jesting and nonsense aside, it is fortunate that I was virtually compelled to come here ; though less conspicuous and important in some respects, it is a village much more “ after my own heart ” than the other, being a post town, easy of access, and combining city and country most delightfully—the very place, in short, for a female seminary ; and they seem to have a very good one, by the way, only they will do their endeavor to make it ridiculous by calling it a college.\* Some of the houses are, it is true, a little on the shingle-palace order ; but then they have plenty of space ; and, if clearing out the underbrush from the groves would be no special disadvantage, it certainly is very refreshing to feel that you are within call of several agreeable neighbors, and just as effectually screened from their optical and involuntary surveillance as if they were miles away. I have been here but a few short weeks, yet find myself recoil-

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\* Possibly this habit originated in a wish to secure the immunities conferred by college charter ; but, now that Brandon College has stepped over into Madison, it will, it is to be hoped, fall heir to the name.

ing, almost ungraciously, from the slightest allusion to my ultimate departure. Indeed, I begin to feel that a certain genus of the class Mississippian is not altogether extinct, though I failed—probably for want of Diogenes' lantern—to find very many specimens in the adjoining town.

This doesn't look much like the "*line*" promised you at the beginning, and all in good faith too, for I actually commenced with the laudable intention of producing, for once, a nice, genteel, lady-like little letter, of the most approved dimensions; but you see the old "counteracting principle" was too much for me, (I do believe I'm haunted by the ghost of a Congressman "done to death" by that savage Gag-law;) and now here the thing is, grown, without any "malice prepense" on my part, into—there's no telling how many quartos! But you know the urchin said "*he didn't whittle—it whithled itself;*" so you'll please to consider that this "*wrote itself,*" and never say *cacoethes scribendi* to me: I tell you it's no such thing—I never did like to write in my life; I write just because I can't help it, (as anybody may see by all these interlineations;) for when my pen "takes the bit in its teeth," and starts off in hot haste after perpetual motion, it's no more use trying to stop it than there would be the steeds of Apollo.\*

I dare say you think it would be much likelier to achieve the object, if it would only bide quietly at

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\* Just so! The thing's all explained now, many thanks to Dr. Samuel Taylor and the last Boston Medical and Surgical Journal—Feb. 7, 1852. The writer's no more responsible than "a sucking dove;" it's all owing to "*detached vitalized electricity,*" alias "*them spirits,*" and their spite because they can't, and she don't, always do a fair share of talking.

home; and so, perhaps, it might, if "Circumstance, that unspiritual god and miscreator," wouldn't be forever setting me "*a ganging*." But I know he will—the spiteful wretch!—and have yet to receive the very first letter ever forwarded (after I had once left a place,) by any of Uncle Sam's agents; so, please be expeditious with your reply, and never mind stopping to prepare me a strait-jacket, for I have taken up an idea the things are not at all becoming, and am quite certain the common sacque is full ugly enough to satisfy any reasonable mortal.

Don't forget, though, to say whether you think my *nomme de plume*, (and *pro tem.*,) euphonious or not. I don't insist, though, that you shall write yourself down among the half-enlightened who object; for it strikes me that Brother Jonathan must have been committing petit larceny on a grand scale, for a long time, to very little purpose, if, after all the foreign literature he has stolen, the whole "free and enlightened" haven't found out how very common it is for princes, and other high nobility, to drop their names and titles, and travel all over the world *incog.* for years and years if they like! And if all the old women in corduroys and dimities, who ever did predict that a slice of green cheese from the mountains in the moon would throw old mother Earth into convulsions, were to fatigue themselves by a desperate attempt to look wise and admonitory on the occasion, it doesn't follow, of course, that I should set about getting up another edition of Esop's long-eared biped, who undertook to ride, drive and carry the other donkey to market, and lost him for his pains, as any one would well deserve to do who could be diverted from his own course (even if it were not the very best,)

by every self-installed Mentor with "the grand talents" for enacting patron on the easy terms of dispensing that cheap commodity called advice. My incognito, if it does nothing else, will, at least, make an admirable divining rod to detect innate vulgarity under all the elaborate gloss of artificial refinement; for who that would not "near the ear" to a key-hole, or tamper with a seal, could ever muster impudence and meanness enough to turn round and say "*What is it?*" when told that a name was temporarily suppressed?

And further, *the patronizing one's equals or betters* being—according to Chateaubriand, Rochefocault, or somebody else—the Sauce-Robert to all human sympathy, I don't wish to see all major-minor and upper-tendom perfectly overwhelmed with obligation, as they might be, if not content with submitting to be *viseed*, examined, cross-examined, *pitied* and *advised* in *propria persona* I should undertake, heedlessly or with malice aforethought, to drag my father's name and the dignity of all spinsterhood (that of the Madams can't be compromised, for the experiment's been tried), through the obloquy of such an utterly obnoxious and altogether detestable ordeal; consequently I don't choose to speculate so extensively in the doubtful stock of republican gratitude.

And that's very humane of me I'm sure, for *excess* of felicity is said to be dangerous, and might prove fatal to some self-constituted Parish Beadle of community, happening to indulge a little too freely in the bliss of asking *a lady*, seen doing what no honest decent woman ever would except "upon compulsion," "*if* she has no home, husband, children, father, mother, brother, sister," and so on *ad infinitum*, "to provide for her?" It's



such a *civil*, gentlemanly way of saying—"I should like of all things to commit you to the stocks as a common vagrant, or send you to the Treadmill as a suspected swindler, instead of advising you to *go on*, or *back*!"\*—such a special treat, to see by the quivering lip, how easily you can plant your talons in the heart-strings, how securely you can go on whetting your ugly, crooked beak on a naked nerve, without so much as giving the soul a single drop of chloroform to begin with, that it's "a wonder," all keen-sighted fiscal purveyors don't pounce upon such a dear delight of life, as subject matter of revenue. Ill-natured wights might say, it was because they chose to tax other people's necessaries, and enjoy their own luxuries gratis; but I wouldn't be so sarcastic for the world.

As for the new prefix, it's far more common and therefore less *distingue* than my own, and clearly "honored by my use," so if *I* choose, I don't see that any one else has a right to protest; in a country where every second or third man you meet, *knows* he was breveted major, colonel, or general on a steamboat-plank, or at some stage or railroad office. Moreover, I have divers of times, once rather recently, seen very pathetic jeremiads over feelings shocked and expectations disappointed, all because many English and most American *Passees* will look old (the graceless, disobliging creatures) "notwithstanding their girlish title," yet never have "the sense to follow the example" of a worthy

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\* Where those very eligible points of topography, "On" and "Back," are, is past my power to discover; though I have an idea that On, must be somewhere in the next new Planet, and Back, at the bottom of the old Cretan Labyrinth; and yet, they may, perhaps, be in a mirage somewhere in Symmes' region.

lady, known to her own cotemporaries and our younger days as "Mrs. Hannah Moore:" though, to be sure, we of the more enlightened—who ought of course to perform more extraordinary feats than anybody else—have of late rejuvenated her back again, despite some eighty odd years, into pretty little *Miss*. The last writer, I believe, proposes to brevet all spinsters of a certain age, *nolens volens*, on the ground that they might perhaps "pass for very agreeable and even good-looking, middle-aged, or elderly ladies," if the "incongruous *Miss*" wasn't forever "conjuring up," in startling contrast, "some bright vision of youth and beauty." Well, if they will, I suppose they will, if we are all ever so barbarously inclined, so one may as well submit gracefully to what is inevitable. But *quid pro quo* and if I can't be allowed the "concatenation accordingly," that same submission is out of the question. Only think now, of putting a dissyllable before a whole handful of consonants, all clumped together any how, and nearly as ugly as Guelph—no wonder we've got so little ear for music left; and why all our mothers and grandmothers didn't prefer being *Miss*-ed to the end of time (like Yankee madams in lower scoredom), rather than tolerate such a perfectly unbearable, ear-grating juxtaposition of sounds, I'm sure I can't divine. Let my Chesterfieldian friends, who *will* insist on considering me one of St. Paul's "widows indeed," look to it; for I'm not certain but it's "*actionable*" as assault and battery on the auricular nerve!

Now that's what I call "defining my position" *a merveille*, and wouldn't it make the Sovereignty's Posture-makers, attitudinizing expositors and "human two-legged political dictionaries," "with inward envy

groan, to find themselves so very much exceeded, in their own way," by an unofficial amateur? I only wish it were half as easy telling what I ever was sent into this world for at all—not certainly to gratify any groveling, earth-ward propensity of mine, for I never remember the day I didn't regret being here; and most assuredly not to refute the anti-republican idea of hereditary transmission, or confirm the flattering theory of modern degeneracy, for an oak, I take it, is not an osier, if it does happen to be uprooted and its foliage scattered to the four winds of heaven. So if half the illuminati, rank and file, were to insist that they saw "no cause," or didn't appreciate the motive; one of *our* amiably vacillating race, could of course do no less, than *feel* sorry, very sorry, they should all be so "right royally fat in the head," and *say*, with one honest, obstinate and impassible enough to have been cousin german to the blood, "I have found you a reason, I am not obliged to find you an understanding also."

Don't be the least alarmed at all these mysterious-looking hieroglyphics—I am not writing Polkas, Ballets, and sky-kicking flourishes "at all at all;" only a regular "skrimmage" between my familiar and your good genius, come to the rescue in the shape of a huge candle-fly: so "God prosper the right," and here's much love to yourself, a kiss for the wee coz., and a gentle hint, that, if not too much trouble, a sketch of the family portraits from "papa" down, would much oblige your isolated, but

Affectionate Cousin,

LOUISE ELEMJAY.

## THE HOME FEVER,

RECOLLECTION OF THE WEST INDIES, BY A. J. PICKERING.

*A pearl of the first water, that should not be tossed back into the sea of oblivion, because the owner left, perhaps, nothing else of its kind, and the finder has nothing to equal its value.*

We sate in a green verandah's shade,  
Where the verdant "Tye-tye" twined  
Its tendrils around us, and made  
A harp for the cool sea-wind,  
That came with its low wild sound at night,  
Like a sigh that is breathing of past delight.

And that wind, with its low sweet breath had come,  
From the Island groves away ;  
And the waves, like wand'ers returning home,  
To the banks rolled wea-ri-ly:  
And the conch's far home-call, the parrots cry,  
All told that the Sabbath of night was nigh.

We sate alone in that trellised bower,  
And gazed o'er the darkening deep,  
And the holy calm of that twilight hour  
Came over our hearts like sleep ;  
And we thought of the banks and "bonny braes,"  
That had gladdened our childhood's careless days.

And he, the friend by my side that sate,  
Was a boy whose path had gone  
Along the flowers and fields of joy, that fate,  
Like a mother, had smiled upon ;  
But alas for the time when our hope hath wings,  
And mem'ry to grief like a syren sings !

His home had been on the stormy shore,  
Of Albyn's mountain land ;  
His ear was tuned to the breaker's roar,  
And he loved the bleak sea-strand ;  
And the torrent's din, and the howling breeze,  
Had all his soul's wild sympathies.

They had told him tales of the sunny lands,  
That rose over Indian seas,  
Where the rivers wandered o'er golden sands,  
And strange fruit bent the trees ;  
They had wiled him away from his childhood's hearth,  
With its tones of love and its voice of mirth.

Now that fruit and the river gems were near,  
And he strayed 'neath a tropic sun ;  
But the voice of promise, that thrilled in his ear  
At that early time, was gone !  
And the hopes he had chased mid the dreams of night,  
Had melted away like the fire-fly's light.

Oh I have watched him gazing long,  
Where the home-bound vessels lay ;  
Cheating sad thoughts with some old song,  
And striving to drive his tears away.  
And well I knew that that weary breast,  
Like the dove of the Deluge, pined for rest.

There was "a worm i' the bud" whose fold  
Defied the leech's art,  
Consumption's hectic plague-spot told  
The tale of a broken heart.

The boy knew he was dying—that is sleep,  
To hearts that linger but to watch and weep!

He died, but mem'ry's thrilling power,  
With its ghost-like train had come,  
To the dark heart's ruin, at that last hour,  
And he murmured, "HOME, *home*, home!"  
And his spirit passed with that happy dream,  
Like a bird in the track of a bright sunbeam.

Oh talk of life to the trampled flower,  
Of light to the falling star,  
Of glory to him who in victory's hour  
Lies cold on the field of war;  
But ye mock the exile's heart when ye tell  
Of aught but the home where it pines to dwell.

\* \* \* \* \*

## ADDENDA

BETWEEN SUSPENSION AND RESUMPTION OF WORK.

EVELYN.

*Written on hearing, seven months after date, of her  
Decease, Aug. 18th, 1851.*

THE last, the last, the last! *Alone,*  
And "darkness visible" around;  
Night's voices strange and eery grown,  
And life a vague and mocking sound.

Half death, half life, how vain the gaze  
For anchors cast in time's wild stream;  
It cannot pierce the gath'ring haze  
That shrouds earth's long and fevered dream.

It sees no smile of days gone by,  
Gleaming above life's sullen wave;  
What once was hope is now a sigh—  
Wingless and blind she needs a grave!

\* \* \* \* \*

I know full well why ills betide,  
And disappointment mars my schemes—  
I've lost the angel from my side,  
The spirit-counsel from my dreams.

I never deemed that soothing tone  
Again would bless my waking ear,  
But ever at th' Eternal throne,  
I knew it pleaded for me here!

That fervent prayer, averting ill,  
 That earnest love, invoking care,  
 For husband, child and sister, still  
 The lone, *lone* heart, but ill could spare

I hear a husband's lonely wail,  
 I hear an orphan's bitter moan ;  
 And wander down life's dreary vale,  
 Alone, *alone*, oh God *how* lone !

We may not soothe each other's grief,  
 We may not wipe each other's tear ;  
 Our Father God, bring thou relief,  
 And bind the hearts left broken here !

*Louisville, Ky., March 24th, 1852.*

“A L'OUTRANCE.”

*Indorsed, (after second perusal, three months from date,) on notice of suspension and rather cool advice to forego resumption.*

I HAVE faith in thee yet, my destiny's star,  
 High hope and a trust that abides evermore ;  
 The crag may be steep and the eyrie afar—  
 The eagle shall yet to its pinnacle soar !

His plume may be reft and his heart may be cold,  
 For the chain that still chafes hath galled him full long ;  
 But his spirit is brave, and never of old  
 Were his pinion and glance more daring and strong.



Oh child of the sun, half buried in clay!  
 Oh vision of light that upward would soar!  
 Oh proud bird of Jove, one spring and away—  
 Thy home it is high, *evermore*, EVERMORE!

Dark, dark lies the shadow on future and past,  
 Yet music still sleeps in the harp's latest string;  
 Æolian tones may be wrung from the blast—  
 On, *on*, tameless bird of the poor broken wing!

Disaster may crush, never conquer the brave!  
 The day is not lost while the cry is ADVANCE!  
 And proudly the triumph rings back from the grave,  
 "No VICTOR IN LIFE, I have warred '*a l'outrance*.'"  
*April 27th.*

## PASS ON.

*A Dirge for the Mighty.*

BANNER, tramp, peal and booming knell,  
 Night's sable pomp round setting sun;  
 A nation's pride and sorrow tell,  
 Yet genius lives—LIFE *is begun!*  
 Pass on.

Pass on—earth has no more to give,  
 Youth's sun has set, Time's brow is wan;  
 The honors, meeds for which men live,  
 Thou'st won them, worn them, pass thou on.  
 Pass on.

Title and mace of little worth,  
 Thy country gives to meaner mind;  
 To thee, such power as few on earth  
 Had wielded nobly for their kind.  
 Pass on.

Never such hearts as clung to thee,  
 Shrined in such love a master name;  
 Never such page as thine shall be,  
 May time efface—THOU art for fame.  
 Pass on.

Faction its breath hath idly spent,  
 Thy stately tread hath onward passed;  
 "ALL'S WELL!" Thou hast thy monument—  
 The stars, thy fitting pall at last!  
 Pass on.

All time is thine—thy name a spell—  
 An ægis to a world is given!  
 Life gave thee toil, death rest—'tis well—  
 Earth *can* no more—God gives thee heaven.  
 PASS ON.

*Lexington, Ky., July 10th, 1852.*

THE END.

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